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DECEMBER 2015



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COVER IMAGE: FABRIZIO CICCONI/LIVING INSIDE. STILL LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY: NICK ROCHOWSKI. PAPER ART: KYLA MCCALLUM/FOIDABILITY



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THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS



Kyla McCallum

Twitter: @Foldability

About Kyla is a designer-maker who created our fabulous cover art (read about her studio, Foldability, on p49)

Influences People like paper artist

Ron Resch and photographer Tim

Walker, who both have a curious approach to the world
Interiors style Mid-century modern. And I like to have my rails of vintage clothing on display!

Design hero I'm in awe of set designer Shona Heath,

who creates dream-like worlds that make me smile

Dream buy A 'Ruché' bed by Inga Sempé for Ligne

Roset, with a giant headboard



Shaun Swainland

Twitter: @madebyradio

Profession

Illustrator

Feature *Rise of the Robotic*

Maids, p83

Inspiration Vintage ephemera,

collectibles and random surprising

finds at car boot sales. I love the typography, logos

and colours of old packaging, too

Design heroes Charles and Ray Eames (read more

about the Barbican's exhibition on the duo on p165)

Favourite design object The 'Phonosuper' radio

by Dieter Rams and Hans Gugelot. I love how

simplicitic it is; it really is a great piece of work



Alex Kristal

Twitter: @thekrystals

About Alex is ELLE Decoration's new Decorating Editor

Interiors style In theory, an oasis

of calm: textures, natural colours

and random storied objects. In

practice, my home is a project still waiting to happen

Inspiration The makers and artisans dedicated

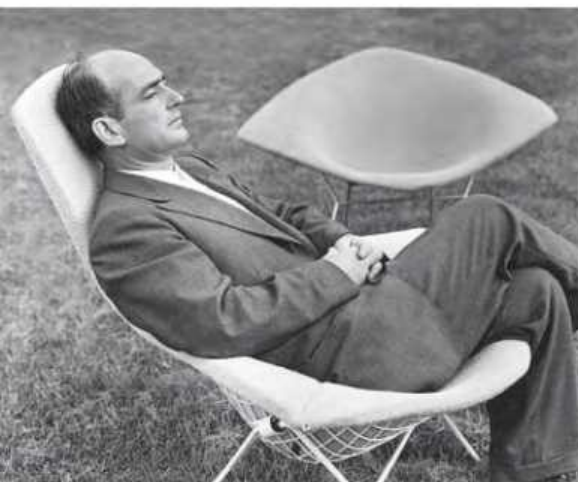
to honing their craft, like Suzusan, which has been

making textiles using the ancient shibori technique

in the Japanese town of Arimatsu for over 100 years

Dream buy A prefab house and a plot of land where

I could build a 'forever' home



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1915 – 2015 Celebrate Harry Bertola, Sculpture and Furniture Designer

Photo: George Cserna

2015 Harry Bertola Bird Lounge Chair and Ottoman

Photo: Gionata Xerra

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ELLE DECORATION #BE ORIGINAL WINTER LUXE

I love this time of year because I like to do layers, on my person and at home. It's how you get to create personal palettes of varying weights, colours and textures in which to cosset yourself against winter wind. Also, I've been making a bold, and quite unprecedented, foray into colour in my attire of late, so I'm rather revelling in the delights of mixing and mismatching turquoise shirts and pale pink coats. My house is not quite so multi-hued (more a range of pale watery shades throughout), but it is certainly a very textural affair. For example, I was determined to have full-length pale celadon velvet curtains upstairs – hang the expense, hang the practicality. I love them. I even love the way that the sun bleaches their edges. They are luxurious, yet plain and simple. I've no idea why people think velvet is a bit fusty; as our shoot on p100 shows, it's eternally contemporary and it also feels wonderful – soft, lustrous and smoothly sumptuous. Perfect for winter. Which also means, yes, the moment has come... it's time to get prepping for Christmas! Whatever one's beliefs, you've got to admit that darker nights and fairy lights are an undeniably seductive combination. They never fail to cheer me. And to add joy to *your* heart, we present our definitive Christmas edit: the wrap, wreath, crackers, cards all sorted, so you'll have more time to drop hints about your gift list (see ours in the next issue). Happy nearly holidays!

Michelle Ogundehin
Editor-in-Chief



PS I'm excited to reveal that I've been involved with Channel 4's *Grand Designs: RIBA House of the Year*, to be broadcast weekly for four weeks starting on Wednesday 4 November. The series, fronted by Kevin McCloud, looks at the longlisted projects for this annual award, and I'm one of the presenters, visiting some of the homes to interview the owners or architects. As to who will win, nobody knew at time of filming (it'll be revealed in the final programme on 25 November), but my money's on Flint House, located on Lord Rothschild's Waddesdon estate in Buckinghamshire. Designed by Skene Catling de la Pena, it's truly a piece of outstanding architecture and I was thrilled that I got to see it up close and personal. We also did some fabulously whizzy filming with cameras on drones!

On set for Channel 4 with Lord Rothschild at Flint House in Buckinghamshire



PICTURES: PAULA BEETLESTONE / CHANNEL 4 TELEVISION

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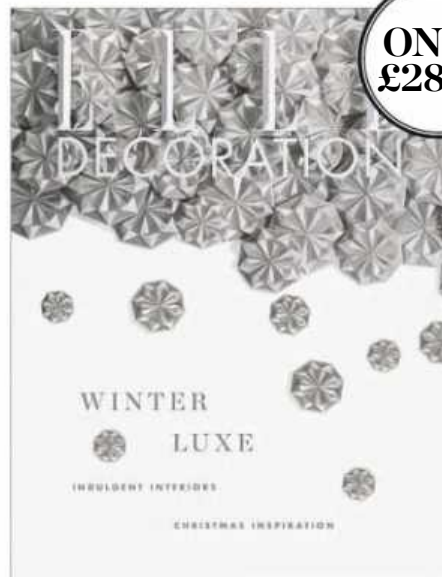
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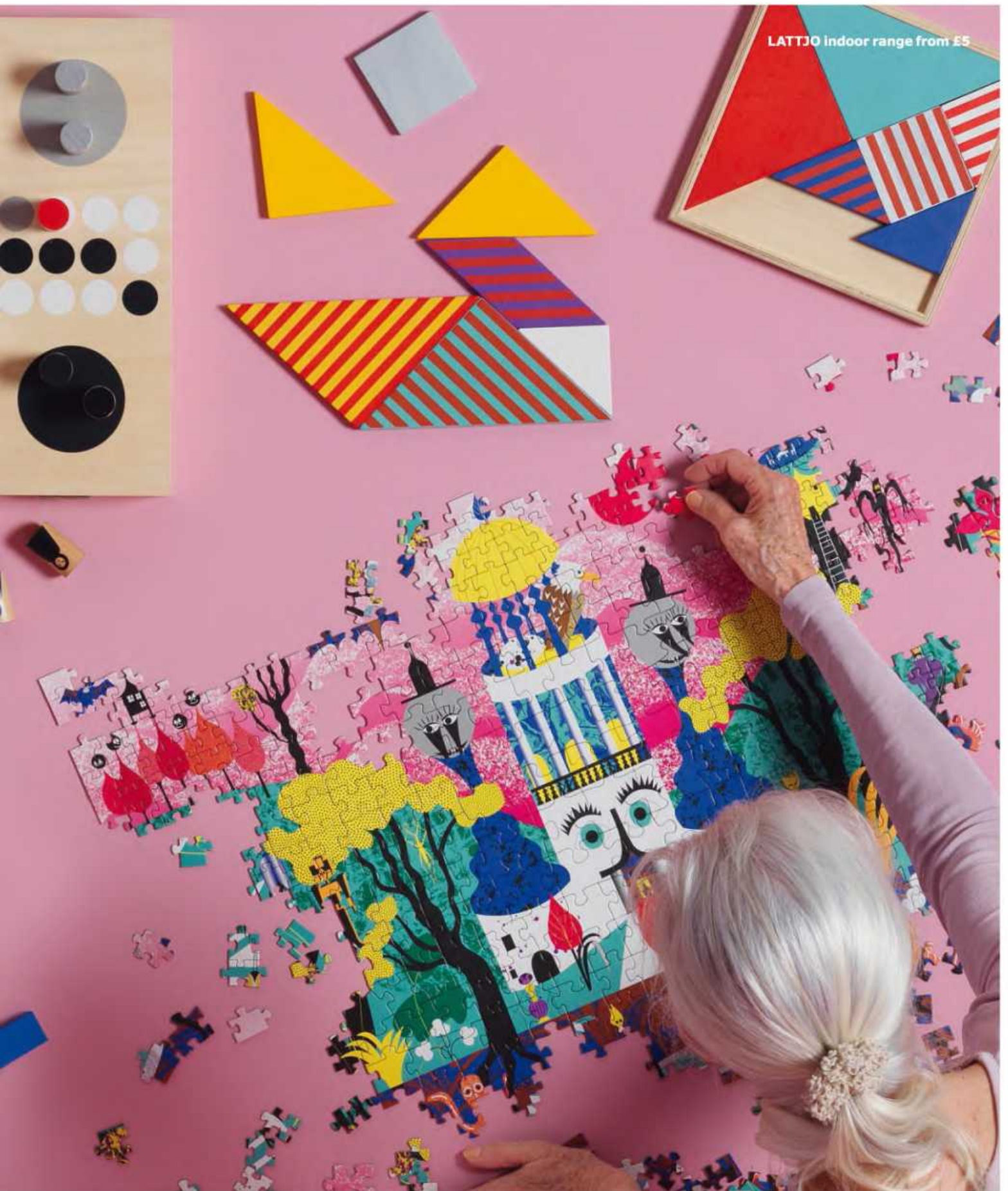
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A tribute to light

Elliott Erwitt, 2014



Naoto Fukasawa: Demetra

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STYLE



THIS MONTH'S BEST BUY...

FRENCH CONNECTION HOME'S new autumn collection is awash with beautiful, affordable designs, including vintage-style rugs in faded hues, shelving units in a gunmetal finish and industrial-style console tables. Our favourite piece, though, has to be this 'Two Tone' mirror (above, £210), which is a work of art.

From left 'Vintage King' rug, £125; 'Veyed' console table, £295; 'Berlin' armchair, £320; 'Adjustable One' lamp, £115, all French Connection Home (frenchconnection.com)

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PURE AND SIMPLE

Canvas Home sells ceramics, glassware, cutlery, linen and furniture, all crafted from sustainable natural materials. Founded in America in 2008 by British designer and entrepreneur Andrew Corrie, who initially made many of the pieces to fulfil specific needs in his own home, the brand's name plays on the idea of a house being full of possibilities. For our money, the 'Abbesses' dinnerware collection is a modern classic: hand-glazed and painted porcelain in classic shapes (above, from £5.71 for a side plate). Pair it with the minimal 'Oslo' cutlery, brushed with 24-carat gold (right, £71.50 for a five-piece set). All available from Selfridges (selfridges.co.uk).



SEASONED PRO

A pinch of pink Himalayan salt, grated parmesan or freshly chopped garlic can elevate a meal from tasty to terrific. Take your seasoning seriously by investing in these functional and attractive storage pots and cleverly designed tools, which are part of the new 'Prep+' collection by contemporary ceramics brand Loveramics. Their simple, rounded forms will make a stylish and practical addition to any kitchen countertop, and they're affordable, too.

From left Grater, £18.47; salt pig, juicer and garlic pot, £14.77 each, all by Loveramics, Amara (amara.com)



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Erased Heritage rugs
by Jan Kath



CREATIVE SPARKS

These customisable lights are a fun way to personalise your home. Luca Nichetto's 'Alphabeta' pendant lamps (left) allow for, amazingly, 10 billion possible design combinations, with eight hand-crafted spun steel shapes and a choice of three colours for each (from £191, Hem; hem.com). The shades conceal two bulbs: one shines light on the ceiling and the other on the floor. Also consider the 'Candyofnie' pendant lights by Fatboy – thread on your choice of glass shapes to create a unique design (above, from £149.95; fatboy.com).

FLEXIBLE WORKING

The articulated task light is a useful addition to any workspace. We love the refined form of the 'Arigato' lamp by Croatian design trio Grupa. It exposes the mechanics of every movement, turning function into art. The design comes in wall, floor and ceiling versions, so you can create a directional lighting scheme in any space. From £151 (grupaproducts.com).

WORDS: ALEX KRISTAL



RAIN OR SHINE

We Brits have a healthy obsession with the weather. Place the beautifully illustrated 'Lovebird' clock with built-in barometer by your door and it will tell you when you need your umbrella. From £275, Loaf (loaf.com).

SPOTLIGHT ON... SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN

Travel anywhere in Scandinavia, or watch one of the 'Scandi noir' TV serials so popular at the moment, and you'll see that good design is an essential in Nordic countries, not an afterthought. Fabulous lighting, chic wooden chairs and natural materials grace even the humblest of homes. Perhaps that's why the region continues to produce outstanding homeware brands on a regular basis. Here, we highlight three to get excited about.



COOEE

From its idyllic base deep in the forests of Småland, Sweden, this brand creates wonderful ceramics, slimline candlesticks (above, £27 each) in warm metallics and cool, neutral colours, and stylish trays (above, from £39; cooe.se).



NORVEGR

Hailing from Norway, Norvegr has been making fine down duvets since the 1950s. Its new travel set (above) – a pillow and single duvet in a calfhide or canvas holdall – has just launched in the UK. From £730, Hostem (hostem.co.uk; norvegr.com).



LOUISE ROE COPENHAGEN

Great, cosy textiles (above, from £59 for a cushion), glassware and marble accessories (top, from £26 for a small black marble bowl) are the strengths of this Danish brand. We also love its grown-up colour palette (louiseroe.dk).

BRAND WATCH ALESSI

Whimsical, functional and often very shiny: Alessi's products are instantly recognisable. The brand's signature material, polished stainless steel, is used to make everything from coffee pots to fruit bowls, honouring a tradition of creating finely crafted metal accessories that goes back to the Italian firm's foundation in 1921.

Current president Alberto Alessi, grandson of founder Giovanni Alessi, has introduced a stellar cast of designers to the company's ranks since he took the helm in 1970. Under his guidance the brand has become a 'factory of Italian design'; a maker of functional, glamorous industrial objects by the illustrious likes of Ettore Sottsass, Achille Castiglioni, Philippe Starck and Ron Arad.

This autumn's collection marks an important turning point. One of Alessi's great designers, the Post-Modernist architect Michael Graves, died in March aged 80, leaving behind his two final projects – a new version of his iconic 'Kettle 9093' with a dragon stopper in place of the original bird, issued to celebrate the design's 30th anniversary (below, 'Tea Rex' kettle, £99.95; two whistles, £13), and the 'MG35' tea infuser, topped with a bird (below centre, £25).

As one icon of the 1980s departed, another arrived. Architect Michele de Lucchi, co-founder of the Memphis collective, has created his first design for Alessi: the 'Pulcina' espresso maker (far right, from £43) is an anthropomorphic form (the name translates as 'chicken') whose stepped exterior has a practical purpose – it facilitates steady heating and cooling.

Other notable new launches include Japanese designer Naoto Fukasawa's sleek 'Cha' teapot (top, £109) and accessories; French talent Inga Sempé's shapely 'Collo-Alto' cutlery (centre, £44 for a place setting); and the 'Rundes Modell' cutlery collection (centre, far right, £75 for a place setting), a classic from 1906 by Josef Hoffmann, co-founder of the Wiener Werkstätte (Austria's answer to the Arts and Crafts movement). That's six great reasons why now is a perfect time to hotfoot it to Alessi's flagship Mayfair store or browse its online shelves (alessi.com).



Visit now The great British high street just got even more exciting, with two of our favourite brands hooking up with major retailers this autumn. Design powerhouse The Conran Shop has launched a new concession at London department store Selfridges (selfridges.com), while Brooklyn-based furniture brand West Elm has opened a shop-within-a-shop at the John Lewis flagship on Oxford Street (johnlewis.com).



BLOOM TIME

British designer Lee Broom has launched his first collection of vases: the 'Podium' range. It has a dramatic, sculptural feel that shows off flowers to great effect. Choose from three shapes in clear lead crystal – a cylinder, globe or bowl – which can each be paired with a simple black or white marble cube base. From £345 each (leebroom.com).



SAATCHI ART

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Swedish artist Jonas Fisch
in his Los Angeles studio

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THE ULTIMATE BATHTIME RITUAL

Dark winter days call for pampering with fluffy towels and comforting scents. Here's how to have a spa-like bathing experience at home



1 Take inspiration from the most beautiful hotel bathrooms and keep your space calm and uncluttered. The marble bathroom in the Hotel Café Royal's Dome Penthouse (above; hotelcaferoyal.com) is flawless, but we also love the tranquil grey bathrooms at Stockholm's Ett Hem hotel (etthem.se), designed by Ilse Crawford.

2 For a stylishly uniform look, decant bath oils and salts into apothecary-style glass jars (top right, from £9, Balineum; balineum.co.uk). Gather soaps and sponges in one of Dutch store Ottomania's traditional silver hamam bowls (above right, from £10; ottomania.nl).

3 Keep products conveniently to hand with Neunzig° Design's dainty Corian 'Skyline' tray stand (far right, £585, Boffi; boffiuk.com) – it's the bathroom equivalent of a bedside table.

4 Our pick of the latest products to fill it with? Lumi Spa's 'Winter' bath oil (right), delicately scented with

sweet almond oil (£42, Skandium; skandium.com); Editions de Parfums Frederic Malle's new 'Lys Méditerranée' body wash, a warming scent with notes of ginger lily, musk and vanilla (£35); and Rodin's neroli and jasmine scented bath bar (above, £28, both Liberty; liberty.co.uk).

5 Be sure to have plenty of thick towels and a plush bath mat. We like Hay's contemporary bath towels in mint green with a flash of fluoro lime (£25, Selfridges; selfridges.com) and Anthropologie's vintage-style 'Philippa' bath mat (above, from £42; anthropologie.eu).

6 Finally, add some relaxing reading material. F Scott Fitzgerald's short story *The Diamond as Big as the Ritz*, published in *Flappers and Philosophers* (left, Penguin Classics, £14.99), features a suitably extravagant bubble-bath scene.



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THE SHOP MONOLOGUE LONDON

Further proof that Redchurch Street is a must-visit destination for homeware shopping comes in the form of Monologue London, with its array of goodies by modern European designers.

Who owns it? Polish-born interior designer Pavel Klimczak, who studied in Toronto and Milan before moving to east London and setting up the store and, soon, an interior design consultancy.

What's so great about it? It's a brilliant mixture of unusual

pieces by hip European brands. 'I wanted to create a design destination where people could come regularly and always find something completely new,' says Klimczak.

Why do shoppers love it? For presenting affordable treasures alongside extravagant finds. A visit might offer up anything from a Nepalese wall rug costing four figures to a carafe by an artisan potter for £44. 93 Redchurch Street, E2 (monologuelondon.com).



BRAND TO WATCH NOVAMOBILI

Making its UK debut this autumn, this furniture brand offers an affordable way to buy into Italian style. Established in 1953 by the Battistella family, it uses recycled wood and a modern colour palette. The company excels at storage – this 'Reverse' modular system (£6,000 as shown) combines concealed and open shelves. Available from Go Modern (gomodern.co.uk; novamobili.it).

PICTURES: ANDREA PITARI / VENEZIA



BEST OF THE WEB: A SPLASH OF COLOUR

This cleverly curated online shop makes it easy to find products that will complement your decor. Pick a colour from the rainbow of inspirational shades on the homepage and the site will display lighting, furniture and art to match. Founder Natasha Broady has gathered unique pieces, such as (clockwise from top left) the 'Depeapa Memphis 3' cushion (£27), 'Schneid Eikon Ray' pendant light (£258) and 'Pie Chart' coffee table (£506) by Herve for H Furniture (asplashofcolour.com).

GOOSE EYE
Cement tiles by Scandinavian
designer Mats Theselius



www.marrakechdesign.co.uk

TREND ALERT

Instantly update your home, with five of this season's hottest new looks

GEOMETRIC SHAPES

All things angular are in, with faceted forms and graphic patterns making this a fierce new look for autumn

From left 'Robot Too' sideboard, £534, &New (andnew.co.uk). 'Brook' pouf, from £760, Moroso (moroso.it). 'Gem' candelabra, £185, Tom Dixon (tomdixon.net). 'Boxinbox' side table by Philippe Starck, £2,290, Glas Italia (glasitalia.com). 'Corners' by Nendo, available Spring 2016, Moroso (moroso.it)



CHILDLIKE DESIGN

The design world is embracing its playful side this season – the fun began with Mooodi's adult-sized rocking horse (left)

From left 'Arion' by Marcel Wanders, £8,420, Mooodi (mooodi.com). 'Rubber Ducky' money bank, £2,400, Asprey (asprey.com). 'Opera' trinket dishes, £18 each, Anthropologie (anthropologie.eu). 'Panda Lux' by Paola Navone (prototype), Cappellini (cappellini.it)



CERULEAN BLUE

Indigo, cobalt and powder blue have all been in favour, but now it's the turn of this bright hue. Team it with warm woods

From left 'Hackney' pouf by Wrong for Hay, £269, Twentytwentyone (twentytwentyone.com). 'Bouchon' stool, £618, Porada (porada.it). 'Campaign' chest of drawers, £1,920, Nicholas Haslam (nicholashaslam.com). 'Wingback' dining chair, £1,600, Tom Dixon (tomdixon.net)



WALL SCULPTURES

Three-dimensional art can make an interesting change from flat paintings and photographs. Take your design cue from Sir John Soane's Museum (right; soane.org), where friezes, mouldings and carvings adorn the packed walls

From left 'Console Rocheuse', £222, Atelier Polyhedre (polyhedre.com). 'Talía' wall art, £75, Lombok (lombok.co.uk)



1970S REDUX

Chunky shapes, rounded corners and a colour palette of rust, gold and black produces a new interpretation of retro glamour. Plus, it's the return of that 1970s staple – the cocktail cabinet!

From left Bench, £2,770, Monologue (monologuelondon.com). 'Elliott' side table, £3,570, Minotti (minotti.com). 'Claude' walnut bar, £2,095, Jonathan Adler (uk.jonathanadler.com)





HOME SCENT ICON 'BIBLIOTHEQUE' BY BYREDO

What does an old library smell like? Leathery, from all those ancient book bindings and well-worn club chairs? Of dusty, musty corners left long undisturbed? The gingery smell of old paper, perhaps? Nostalgic and lovely as these things may be, they're not the first aromas you might imagine as the ideal scents for your home. Yet there are many perfumed candles that claim to encapsulate a library-like atmosphere. Ranking high among them is Swedish perfumery Byredo's 'Bibliothèque', which manages to transform a scent that could be fusty into something modern and magical.

The candle takes the mood and smells we associate with a library and recreates them in a way that's at once familiar and unexpected. The tangy-sweet odour of old books and beeswax-polished wood panelling is rendered

with notes of plum, peach, vanilla and leather; powdery violet suggests a faint mustiness in the air; and dry, earthy patchouli evokes a contemplative space where time has stood still. 'It's a timeless scent, unique and quite addictive,' says Ben Gorham, founder of Byredo. 'It's also one of the most popular of our home fragrances.' This November sees the launch of a limited-edition 'Bibliothèque' room spray – packaged, like the candle, in classy black and white. No other Byredo candle has received this honour, so what made Gorham single this one out? 'I thought it would be the perfect indulgence to enjoy at home on a cold winter night,' he explains. With its warm, caramel-sweet overtones, it will be an excellent home comfort. Candle, £50; limited-edition room spray, £60, both Liberty (liberty.co.uk; byredo.com).



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INSIDE STORY SKULTUNA

Set in a picturesque valley 75 miles west of Stockholm, the Skultuna brassworks (far right) is a beautiful old brick factory with a riverside tea terrace, a collection of outlets by heritage Scandinavian brands and a museum. It's also the home of one of Sweden's oldest design manufacturers. If you're heading to Sweden, it's well worth a visit.

Skultuna was established in 1607 by King Karl IX, in the hope that a new brass foundry would boost his country's export income and pay off some of its debts. The location he chose – at a crossroads between a brook that provided water power, the Falun copper mine, and a natural source of charcoal to fuel the furnaces – is where Skultuna still resides today, despite three occasions when the factory has burnt down (in 1671, 1780 and 1913) and another when it was destroyed by a spring flood (in 1818). The company is renowned for its beautifully simple brass homewares, including a classic chamber candlestick

Founded in 1607, the company remains known for its beautiful brass homewares

known as 'The Office' (above right, £48), which has been in production since the 1630s. But its great strength has long been its collaborations with contemporary designers, starting with Carl Hjalmar Norrström – a prominent exponent of Art Nouveau – in the 1890s. In the mid-century period, silversmith Pierre Forssell produced restrained Modernist pieces including the 'Tulip' candlesticks (£176 for a set of three) and in the 1980s, Swedish prince turned industrial designer Sigvard Bernadotte created a line of dining ware.

Today, much of the brand's output is strikingly modern, from jewellery designer Lara Bohinc's 'Wilkinson' desktop accessories (top, from £62 for a letter rack) to Danish duo GamFratesi's 'Karui' trays (from £70 each), which combine spun brass – a signature Skultuna technique – with coloured leathers from the Tärnsjö tannery near the foundry. However, Skultuna's historical buildings are still celebrated in the delicate design of the 'The Factory' tealight holder (right, £52). All pieces are available online or at the brand's concept store in central Stockholm (skultuna.com).



WORDS: AMY BRADFORD

ALESSI

The Useful Art



"Pulcina"
Espresso coffee maker
design Michele De Lucchi, 2015

IN COLLABORATION WITH



R & D LAB





MY CULTURAL LIFE

MATTHEW WILLIAMSON

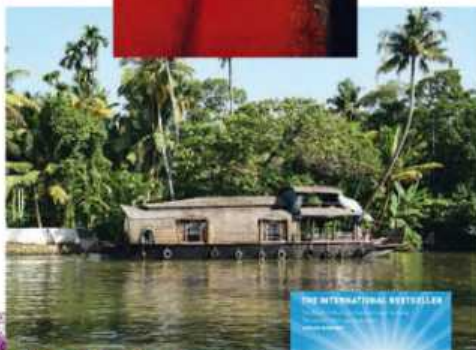
We ask a tastemaker what they are reading, watching, downloading and listening to

After studying fashion and textile design at Central Saint Martins, Matthew Williamson showed his debut ready-to-wear collection, 'Electric Angels', in 1997, which established his signature look of colourful, boho-chic designs. In 2002, he joined Designers at Debenhams and created his successful 'Butterfly by Matthew Williamson' range. He has also collaborated with The Rug Company and Osborne & Little (@MWWorld; matthewwilliamson.com).

I'm currently listening to the soundtrack from recent film *Inherent Vice* starring Joaquin Phoenix. Like the movie, the music has a very cool, gritty, slightly dark 1970s feel.

I don't have a favourite piece of music as I get bored quickly if I stick with one style or genre. I prefer to mix things up – my favourite playlist jumps through the decades and across continents, from Beyoncé to Mozart (right) and everything in between. Thank God for Spotify! **One song that makes me feel instantly happy** is Soul II Soul's *Back to Life (However Do You Want Me)*. I remember buying the 12-inch as a teenager and playing it constantly for months. When I hear it now, it takes me back but still feels current. It doesn't seem to have aged.

The book that's influenced me the most is *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment* by Eckhart Tolle (below right, Yellow Kite, £6.99). It's a simple but inspiring read that analyses why many of us are losing the ability to see life as it is – we're either wrapped up in the past or worried about the future, and so are losing the ability to appreciate the here and now.



My favourite poem is

The Breeze At Dawn by 13th-century Persian poet Rumi. I love all of his poems but find this one particularly powerful. It reminds us to stay alert to the beauty of the world. It makes me feel

positive and hopeful and has a calming effect.

The last exhibition I saw was the 'Summer Exhibition' at the Royal Academy of Arts in London. I loved the rainbow-striped, vinyl-taped staircase in the entrance by established artist Jim Lambie. It's inspiring to see the show's eclectic mix of work by lesser-known artists from all walks of life.

If I had a free day in London, I'd drive to Petersham Nurseries in Richmond, pick up some plants for my garden and have a leisurely lunch there. I always leave with a car boot-full of goodies and a much slimmer wallet! I'd then take my dog Mr Plum for a run in the nearby park to work off some of his boundless energy. I'd finish the day with dinner in my favourite local restaurant, Lemonia (below), in Primrose Hill, where I've lived for the past 20 years.

I love the area's village feel and hilltop view of London (above).

I have two favourite destinations. One is the Kerala backwaters, a chain of lakes and lagoons in southern India

(above left), which I love for their idyllic, natural environment and simple way of life. I also really like Deià, a coastal village in Mallorca (top), for similar reasons – it's charming and relatively undeveloped.

I was a total technophobe until recently. However, like many others, I've now caught the Instagram bug. I've also become fascinated with e-commerce, as my ready-to-wear clothing brand has just become an exclusively online business.



Big Table _ design Alain Gilles

BONALDO

TAKAHASHI HIROKO

The Japanese artist whose bold monochrome prints adorn a new range of home scents

Words **AMY BRADFORD**

TAKAHASHI HIROKO could be the younger, more contemporary sister of groundbreaking artist Yayoi Kusama – with her penchant for graphic outfits and for styling herself as a living artwork, the similarities are striking. Kusama famously fixates on bright polka dots, but for Hiroko, it's circles and straight lines in black and white – she sees them as a metaphor for a simple life.

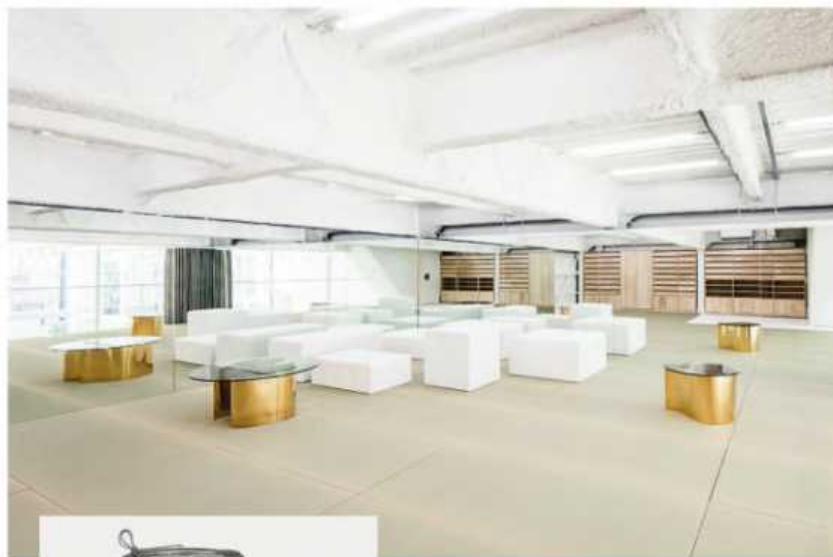
Hiroko has been enchanted by fashion and textiles since her childhood, when she would spend hours dressing her dolls in costumes handmade by her mother and grandmother. She went on to study dyeing and weaving at the prestigious Tokyo University of the Arts, where she fell in love with the art of the kimono. Her modern versions of the traditional garment, featuring eye-popping patterns, are exhibited hung flat on walls, alongside portraits of the artist wearing them (far right).

Hiroko works from her studio in Tokyo, a former factory converted by Japanese architect Jo Nagasaka into a three-storey, glass-and-steel space (right). Its top floor is a lush indoor jungle where exotic plants and herbs are grown and the second floor is a showroom (top), while the ground-floor exhibition space plays host to rows of kimono-clad mannequins, crafted to resemble Hiroko (bottom). She has collaborated with the likes of Italian designer Enzo Mari (on a series of chairs covered

in her prints) and Issey Miyake (on a line of kimonos), created weddings rings and ceramics, and launched her own brand, Hirocoledge, selling t-shirts, fans, cotton bags and jewellery. This autumn, she's releasing her first collection of exquisite scented candles and room diffusers adorned with her signature patterns (right).

There are five scents in the range, each featuring unusual accords inspired by Hiroko's childhood memories: 'Go' for

instance, is a blend of tomato, rhubarb, honey and jasmine that evokes summer holidays, while 'Yon' hints at the artist's sweet tooth, with notes of cinnamon, burnt caramel and popcorn. What really seduces, though, are the bone china vessels that house them, each one adorned with dots, stripes and curlicues – they're objects to cherish forever. Candles, £60 each; diffusers, £75 each, Unique & Unity (uniqueandunity.co.uk; takahashihiroko.com). **ED**



Hiroko sees the monochrome circles and lines that adorn her kimonos and the vessels of her new scents as a metaphor for a simple life

EVERY PIECE COMES WITH A STORY



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DESIGN HERO WALTER CRANE

The Arts and Crafts hero's work is revived in a new children's book

Words **DOMINIC LUTYENS**

WALTER CRANE (1845–1915) was a key member of Britain's Arts and Crafts movement. A prolific polymath, he created handmade wallpapers, textiles, ceramics and stained glass. He also illustrated many books, from children's stories such as *The Baby's Own Aesop*, which featured shortened versions of the classic fables, to Edmund Spenser's 16th-century epic poem *The Faerie Queene*. Like his hero and friend William Morris, Crane was an early socialist, bent on reviving traditional crafts because he believed industrial manufacturing robbed workers of creative and pleasurable involvement in what they made. Crane's multidisciplinary

approach sprang from his politics: a return to greater craftsmanship in all areas of design, he argued, would help to bring art into everyone's daily lives. Ironically, his admirably democratic ideals were compromised since, as he admitted, 'Cheapness in art and handicraft is well-nigh impossible'. Indeed, it was mainly the burgeoning middle classes who could afford his designs.

Born in Liverpool, Crane followed in the footsteps of his father Thomas, also an artist. Aged 17 and living in London, he exhibited a picture entitled *The Lady of Shalott*, based on the poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, at the Royal Academy. Several years earlier he had been

PICTURES: HEARST STUDIOS, GETTY



apprenticed to wood engraver William James Linton and, in 1863, was employed by printer Edmund Evans to illustrate nursery rhymes and fairy tales. Crane's formative influences included the Pre-Raphaelites, Italian Renaissance art and Japanese prints. From 1875, Jeffrey & Co produced his frieze-like wallpapers, which teem with exotic, large-scale motifs – peacocks, swaggering swans, Madonna lilies and mythological figures – in rich tones such as moss green and burnt orange. Crane also made pottery and ceramic tiles for Wedgwood, Lancastrian pottery brand Pilkington's and Staffordshire tile specialist Maw & Company.

In later life, Crane became involved in the Art Workers' Guild, founded in 1884 to promote

Crane believed that a return to craftsmanship would help bring art into everyone's daily lives

'unity of all the arts', and its offshoot, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, which held design shows at the New Gallery on Regent Street. Crane also exhibited his work in America, and, in 1898, was appointed principal of the Royal College of Art.

Fast forward to today, and a newly published children's book *Wendy and the Wallpaper Cat* by Jason Hook and Ilaria Demonti (V&A Publishing, £11.99) attests to Crane's enduring appeal. Its heroine is cured of insomnia after seeing her Grandpa Walter's wallpapers come to life – a gloriously whimsical tale that promises to introduce a new generation to Crane's sumptuous designs. If you like the designer's style, you can buy a selection of prints featuring his illustrations at Art.co.uk. **ED**

Wallpapers, from left 'Orange Tree'; 'Seashore'; 'The Formal Garden'; 'Saxon'; and 'Nursery Rhymes'

Above Pages from new book *Wendy and the Wallpaper Cat*, (V&A Publishing, £11.99), which is set to bring Crane's wonderfully whimsical designs to a new generation

CRAFT



THE PAST ON A PLATE

British designer Richard Brendon's latest tableware collections reinvent two historic craft forms

Words **EMMA LOVE**



THINK OF HAND-PAINTED FINE CHINA and floral patterns probably spring to mind – which is why Richard Brendon's new 'Arc' collection of Art Deco-inspired tableware, with its matt black and burnished gold design, is a breath of fresh air. Not only does it push the boundaries in visual terms, it also showcases the skills of decorators working in the potteries of Stoke-on-Trent today.

Brendon's interest in the skill of hand painting was piqued in 2011, when he was working on his 'Reflect' collection. For the project he paired vintage saucers with new cups gilded in platinum and gold (far right). 'I scoured antiques fairs buying secondhand saucers and observed how the world of hand-painted ceramics has changed during the last 300 years,' he explains. 'In the 1920s, hand painted details were much more graphic compared to any other period in British ceramics. For the "Arc" collection, I wanted to bring that back but in a contemporary, relevant way.'

Richard Brendon's 'Arc' collection pushes the boundaries in visual terms, but also showcases the skills of traditional potters

Over the last few years, Brendon has garnered a reputation for his fine china collections – including a boldly striped collaboration with Patternity for Fortnum & Mason; 'Details from Willow', a pared-down take on the traditional Willow pattern; and 'Speck', which celebrates the tiny black dots left on china after firing. He has recently introduced a new bespoke service that means his designs are now available in a palette of 12 colours.

Brendon has also branched out into a new material: lead crystal, which was first developed in England around 400 years ago. His 'Diamond' collection of barware (right) consists of a decanter and four glasses, each mouth blown and hand cut with a tiny diamond pattern that reflects the light and is incredibly tactile. 'As with my ceramics, I'm using a traditional material that lasts forever and working with craftspeople who are the best at what they do,' he enthuses. 'Hopefully in one hundred years' time, people will look at these collections and still think they're beautiful.' We don't doubt it. 'Arc' collection, from £50 for a bread plate; 'Diamond' collection, from £40 for a shot glass (richardbrendon.com).



Clockwise from top Brendon's 'Arc' dinnerware collection is inspired by graphic Art Deco designs; all of his bone china pieces are made in Stoke-on-Trent, the historic heart of British pottery; Brendon with his 'Reflect' cups and saucers; the hand-cut 'Diamond' barware collection

ONE-STOP SHOP

'Present & Collect' is a new selling exhibition at the Contemporary Applied Arts gallery in Southwark that features everything from tableware by potter Derek Wilson (top) to gorgeous blue lampshades by glass artist Michael Ruh, wooden furniture by Angus Ross ('Unstable' stool, bottom) and monumental 'moon jars' by ceramicist Akiko Hirai. It's the perfect place to snap up crafty Christmas presents, as well as sought-after collectors' pieces. 19 November–24 December (caa.org.uk).



TEXTILES TIP

These gorgeous cushions are part of lifestyle brand Tiipoi's first textiles collection. The brand aims to bring the best of Indian crafts to a western audience, and this range was inspired by the horizontal lines and bold colours of traditional southern Indian 'jamakkalam' techniques – where weavers rhythmically throw a shuttle across a five-metre pit loom to create patterns of blocks, lines and dashes. Each cushion is made from organically dyed cotton. A great way of adding Op Art graphics to your sofa or floor. £70 each (tiipoi.com).

POTTED FASHION

Inspired by offcuts from the fashion industry, Yiqi Yan and Yang Li – who last year set up a joint practice, Sisal Studio – have launched 'Fabric', a range of plates, cups and misshapen vessels made from recycled clothes that have been brushed with clay then fired in a kiln. 'The fabric is soft, so it changes shape when it's fired,' says Li. 'The designs are environmentally friendly and every piece is unique, because each item of clothing has its own story.' From £30 for a cup (sisalstudio.com).





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JOIN THE FOLD

Paper artist Kyla McCallum (above) is the talented maker behind our fabulous cover art – she hand-folded 50 bespoke designs that look like a mix between falling snowflakes and diamonds, as well as the letters of the ELLE Decoration logo. ‘The idea was to echo the luxurious theme of the issue,’ says McCallum, who makes framed prints and delicate paper lampshades inspired by origami for her studio, Foldability (foldability.co.uk). She also features alongside ceramicists (such as Nicola Tassie, right), weavers, spoon carvers and

cobblers in new book ‘Makers of East London’ (Hoxton Mini Press, £30). The title goes behind studio doors to offer an insight into the working lives of the craftspeople who are leading a ‘handmade revolution’. Design blogger Katie Treggiden tells their stories, while photographs by Charlotte Schreiber show how the objects we love are made.

➤ See a video of Kyla making our snowflakes at elledecoration.co.uk





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ELLE DECORATION *Christmas edit*

*The festive frenzy is almost upon us! But don't fret, we've done the hard work for you.
Here are our seven simple steps to make your home merry and bright*



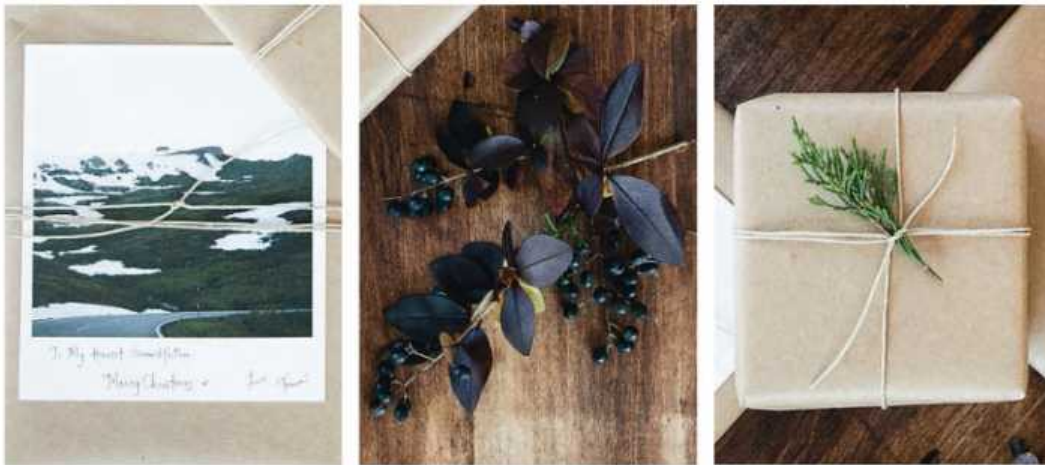
'Falling Leaves' mobile
by Kanehen, £395, The
Shop Floor Project
(theshopfloorproject.com)



The wrap

Want to make your presents look stylish under the tree?
Use this glamorous gilt gift wrap, illustrated with
a charming bird's-eye view of London

ALTERNATIVELY, DECORATE YOUR GIFTS



WITH BROWN PAPER AND STRING, THEN ADD



ARTY SNAPS FOR A PERSONAL TOUCH

PICTURES: GETTY (PREVIOUS PAGE), MATT VEA, ARTIFACT UPRISING

Above This Christmas we will be taking inspiration from Artifact Uprising (artifactuprising.com), which has given traditional brown paper and string packaging a creative twist by attaching personalised Instagram-style photos – from £9.99 for a box of 12 prints, Photobox (photobox.co.uk) – and sprigs of festive foliage. Scribble your message on the bottom of each snap **Opposite** ‘Gold London Map’ wrap by Michael A Hill, £1.50 per sheet, Lagom Design (lagomdesign.co.uk)

#2 *The wreath*

Christmas is the perfect time to get creative. And this indoor decoration is fun to make, so start cutting and sticking



simply cut out leaves



make fringed feathers



stick to an embroidery hoop

We love this original decorating idea by Craftberry Bush (craftberrybush.com). Here is how you can do it yourself **The feathers** Fold pieces of brown card and tissue paper down the centre to create the veins of the feathers, then cut out the shapes and make small slits along their edges to create the feathery effect **The wreath** Purchase an embroidery hoop and glue the card and tissue paper feathers to it, being sure to mix up the sizes and textures for a natural look





#3

The crackers

*Get more bang for your buck during
the festive season with these stylish
monochrome numbers*

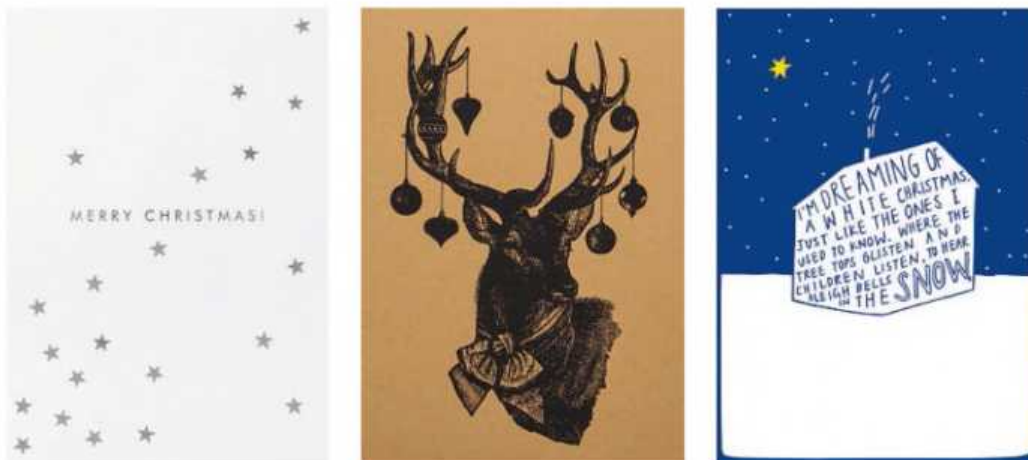
#4 *The cards*

A Christmas card can be a thing of beauty rather than garish and glitzy. Here's our pick of the season's best

SPREAD A LITTLE COMFORT AND JOY BY



FILLING THESE CHIC CONTEMPORARY CARDS WITH



WISE WORDS AND WONDERFUL WISHES



THERE'S NOTHING
QUITE LIKE THE SCENT,
LOOK AND MAGIC
OF A REAL TREE,
SO NEVER GO FAKE



#5

The decorations

*Adorn your tree with these totally timeless gems.
Carefully create a cherished collection, adding
a few new designs every year*



Clockwise from top left Wooden decoration by Sebastian Cox, £9, Heal's (heals.com). 'Birch Bark' snowflake decoration, £16.50 for 24, Cox & Cox (coxandcox.co.uk). Brass geometric pendant, £15, Darkroom (darkroomlondon.com). 'Metal 3D Star' bauble, £4.50, John Lewis (johnlewis.com). 'Bird House' decoration, £14.70, Mary Neeson Ceramics (maryneesonceramics.com). Brass geometric pendant (see previous). 'Mini Porcelain Bell' decoration, £22 for 12, The White Company (thewhitecompany.com). Wooden decoration (see previous). 'Gold Geo Wire' decoration, £4, Oliver Bonas (oliverbonas.com). 'Monochrome and Gold' paper bauble, £45 for 6, Rose & Grey (roseandgrey.co.uk). Wooden decoration (see previous). Brass geometric pendant (see previous) **Opposite** Brass ornaments, £11 each, Ferm Living (fermliving.com)

#6 *Something different*

Make a kokedama! We didn't know what they were at first either, but now we're smitten by these Japanese versions of bonsai



Want to make your own? Slow Living Workshops (slowlivingworkshops.com) explain how **1** Choose your plant – we've selected a fern – and take it out of its pot **2** Gently loosen the roots, being sure not to remove too much of the soil **3** Add a new layer of soil to the roots, dampening it so that you can form a ball **4** Place moss around the outside of the ball **5** Wrap it with string to keep the moss and soil in place **6** Attach the end of the string to a needle and sew it into the moss ball to secure

PICTURES: CHARLOTTE SCHWIDT OLSEN, GETTY

CREATE THESE



DANGLING BUNDLES

OF FESTIVE GREENERY

FOR AN ORIGINAL

CHRISTMAS DECORATION

#7 *The stockings*

Dangling from a mantelpiece or at the end of your bed, these stockings in subtle shades are the only ones to hang this Christmas – and they're stylish enough for adults, too!



Top left to bottom right 'Antares Star' stocking; 'Harbour Stripe' stocking; 'Chevy' stocking; 'Cove' stocking; 'Classic Clarendon' stocking; 'Boulder' stocking; 'Small Broadway Pattern' stocking; 'Kensal Check' stocking; 'Hamilton Small Spot' stocking, all £60 each, 45cm from top to toe, Tori Murphy (torimurphy.com)

PICTURES: GETTY



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SOLUTIONS

THE TREND TO TRY THIS MONTH...

**SET THE TONE FOR
A RESTFUL NIGHT'S SLEEP**
with an all-black backdrop to
create a tranquil environment.

Dulux's colour experts are
predicting a shift towards deep,
light-absorbing paint shades
for the coming season, with
colours such as its new 'Lights

Out' (£24.99 per 2.5 litres;
dulux.co.uk) taking centre stage.
Complement with bedlinens
in shades of grey – for similar
try H&M (from £79.99 for
a double duvet set; hm.com).

PICTURE: KRISTOFER JOHNSON | PHOTOGRAPHY: PELLA HEDEBY, MARIE RAMSE STYLING

FOR MORE HOME UPDATES, VISIT ELLEDECORATION.CO.UK/SOLUTIONS

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EASY INDUSTRIAL

Use these large porcelain tiles to give your floor, wall or kitchen splashback a weathered metallic glow. The 'I Metalli' designs by Laminam are easy to install and mimic the industrial look of rusting or patinated iron, brass, copper and bronze without the upkeep. They can be used as exterior cladding, too. £119.56 per square metre (laminam.co.nz).



'Ferro Ossidato'



'Madreperla Ossidato'



'Plumbeo Ossidato'



'Plutonio Ossidato'



SHEER DELIGHT

Opaque material provides privacy and a cosy atmosphere without blocking out all of your precious daylight. This 'City Lights' fabric by Jane Churchill is the stylish, modern alternative to traditional net curtains and allows a soft, diffused, 'twinkling' glow to fill the room. Hang yours with a draping pencil pleat to create a contemporary window dressing. £79 per metre, Colefax and Fowler (cofax.com).



PAINT BY NUMBERS

American brand Benjamin Moore's fortified resin paints come in a choice of 3,500 rich hues that don't fade, mark or rub off. The paints also have great coverage: two coats will be more than enough, even for the darkest shade. 'Regal Select', £17 per litre (benjaminmoorepaint.co.uk).



SIGNATURE STYLE

Looking for a custom-design flooring solution with perennial appeal? Amtico's got it covered

Flooring has come a long way since the days when wall-to-wall carpet was the *sine qua non* of British domestic interiors. But traditional hardwood, stone and ceramics can be impractical or limiting day-to-day – which is where Amtico's high-performance vinyl flooring comes in.

Whether you're a pared-back minimalist or someone in search of a more dramatic style statement, Amtico products offer great design flexibility so that they can be tailored to your taste and requirements. The Amtico Signature collection, however, takes individuality to another level again. This premium, custom flooring solution lets you select from a wide variety of designs that replicate natural finishes, as well as a vast selection of laying patterns to give you the freedom to create a floor that's truly unique to you. Mix and match wood, stone, or ceramic finishes; create a focal point in a large living space with a statement motif; add a border to frame and enhance your chosen look: the only limit is your imagination.

All Amtico Signature products are designed and made in Britain, and come with an extra-hardwearing layer that's protected by a lifetime guarantee. Naturally warm underfoot and compatible with underfloor heating, Amtico products are both water-resistant and easy to maintain: suitable, in other words, for use in any room in your home. It's a perfect match of style and substance. What's not to like?

For brochures, samples and to find your nearest store call 0121 514 8639 or visit amtico.com



Top 'Patina Dusk' floor tiles with 'Lotus' motif, Amtico Signature
Above 'White Wash Wood', 'Script Maple Silver' and 'Harbour Pine' floor tiles, in a customised 'Random Plank' and 'Herringbone' laying pattern, Amtico Signature
Right 'Mirabelle Creme' and 'Slate Noire' floor tiles in 'Checker Board' laying pattern with 'Bevelled Diamond' and 'Offset Stripe' borders, Amtico Signature





BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL

Interior designer Sarah Lavoine (left) believes that we should all be a bit more daring with our use of colour. Since forming her studio in 2002, Lavoine has gained a reputation for vivid designs and has transformed some amazing spaces – most recently the chic eatery Victoria 1836 and her eponymous boutiques in Paris – by artfully contrasting a monochrome palette with rich jewel tones. She has even created her own signature paint colour, ‘Bleu Sarah’, which is splashed generously across the walls of her own apartment,

Sarah Lavoine’s Mondrian-inspired ‘Radiouse’ wall lights are an easy way to imitate the interior designer’s colour confident style in your own home

also in Paris. Now, Lavoine is on a mission to bring a little of her colour confidence to your home with her new collection of vibrant, Mondrian-inspired ‘Radiouse’ wall lights (below). ‘Lighting is key to any interior’, she explains. ‘It underlines its soul’. The lights come in four different colour combinations, each one a functional piece of art – mix and match them for a scheme that’s consistent without being samey. They will brighten up a plain wall, but we advise you to take a leaf out of Lavoine’s book and be brave, clashing them with a vibrant paint job. From £101 each (sarahlavoine.com).



From top The bright hallway in Sarah Lavoine's own Parisian apartment, painted in her signature ‘Bleu Sarah’ hue; Mondrian-inspired ‘Radiouse’ wall lights (from £101 each; sarahlavoine.com)

'Tilesquare' tiles in
grey, £6 each, Tine K
(tinekhomes.com)



CEMENT YOUR LOVE OF TILES

We love the subtle colours and textural feel of cement tiles and today's hottest designs feature geometric prints and figurative patterns. The traditional method of making encaustic tiles has remained relatively unchanged from when it was first devised 150 years ago: cement is hand poured, compressed with ground-up marble and stone and infused with pigment, before being dried out in the sun. Unlike other tiles, the pattern on cement ones will never wear off, because the colour is worked through the whole tile rather than just the top layer. Lee Thornley, founder of Bert & May, recommends that once installed, encaustic tiles should be left to dry out for a week, at which point they can be protected with a wax sealant. Cement is an excellent heat conductor, so the tiles work well with underfloor heating, too. Below is our pick of the best.



- 1** 'Keidos' tiles by Alberto Sánchez, from £94.47 per square metre, Mut Design (mutdesign.com) **2** 'Warped Diamond' tile by Jethro Macey, £190 per square metre, Workhouse (workhousecollection.co.uk) **3** 'Zig Zag Light' tiles by Popham Design, from £200 per square metre, Ann Sacks (annsacks.com) **4** Moroccan tile, £50 per square metre, Best Tile (besttile.com) **5** 'Orchard' tiles by Claesson Koivisto Rune, £117 per square metre, Marrakech Design (marrakechdesign.se) **6** 'Arlequin' tile, £87 per square metre, Emery & Cie (emeryetcie.com) **7** 'Motif Pois' tile, £87 per square metre, Emery & Cie (emeryetcie.com) **8** 'Pencil Churriana' tile, £25 per square metre, Bert & May (bertandmay.com) **9** 'Geo Criss Cross' tiles by Deborah Osburn, from £4.21 per tile, Cle (cletile.com) **10** 'Zest' tiles by India Mahdavi, £153 per square metre, Bisazza (bisazza.com)



Clockwise from top left Marble shelf, £68, House Doctor (housedoctor.dk). 'True Color' vase by Lex Pott, £190, &Tradition (andtradition.com). 'Laust' plate, £30, Broste Copenhagen (brostecopenhagen.com). 'Timothy' pendant light, £110, Pooky (pooky.com). 'Limba' wallpaper, £69.10 per ten-metre roll, Casamance (casamance.com). Wall lamp, £263, House Doctor (housedoctor.dk). 'Selke' cabinet, £2,360 as shown, Hem (hem.com). 'Etah' chair by Paola Navone for Baxter, £870, Anna Casa (annacasa.net). 'Circus' pouf by Simon Legald, from £380, Normann Copenhagen (normann-copenhagen.com). 'Karui' tray by Gam Fratesi, £235, Skultuna (skultuna.com). 'Siena' side table, from £910, Tom Faulkner (tomfaulkner.co.uk). 'Minx' armchair, £5,396, Amy Somerville (amysomerville.com)

WORDS: ALEX KRISTAL
PICTURES: PAOLO SPINAZZE
HEAST STUDIOS, DAMIAN RUSSELL

THE RICHEST OF GREENS

Pair this season's sumptuous shade of deep green with the warm lustre of patinated metal – very apt given that historically pigments used to make the colour green were based on copper minerals such as malachite; or verdigris, a brilliant hue produced as a result of the oxidation process. Start with your walls – Little Greene's 'Dark Brunswick Green' (from £75 for five litres; littlegreene.com) is a good match, or try 'Malachite' by Fired Earth (£62.50 for five litres; firedearth.com) – then choose from our edit of opulent furnishings.

Above 'Spon' bedlinen, from £130 for a pair of pillowcases; 'Bis' pillowcase, £110; 'Lite Zigs' cotton and linen pillowcase, £195 for a pair; 'Metric' duvet cover, £450; 'Nodo' wool throw, £475; 'Paco' alpaca throw, £475, all by Society Limonta, Harrods (harrods.com)



From left 'Cut & Paste' wallpaper, £125 per ten-metre roll, All The Fruits (allthefruits.bigcartel.com). 'Sentiments' wallpaper by Ingrid + Mika, £69 for a ten-metre roll, Milton & King (uk.miltonandking.com)

PLAY WITH PATTERN

Wallpaper does not have to be uniform. Be creative with your decorating scheme by mixing graphic patterns for a look that is individual. No need to invest in multiple designs, though. We've discovered three exciting companies that offer papers which include a mixture of complementary patterns on every roll – from left, All The Fruits, Ingrid + Mika and Kirath Ghundoo (details below). 'Cut and paste sections, apply them landscape or portrait. It's fun and spontaneous,' says Ghundoo.



Above 'Mix n Match' wallpaper in 'Tropic' (top) and 'Monochrome' (bottom), both £95 for a ten-metre roll, Kirath Ghundoo (kirathghundoo.com)



ROCK STARS

Mimic the intricate patterns of strata (layers of earth or rock formed over thousands of years) using the latest fabrics, accessories and wallpapers – Fornasetti's illustrations of malachite make a striking wallcovering in this room designed by Greg Natale (left, £76 per ten-metre roll, Cole & Son; cole-and-son.com).

Clockwise from top 'Agate Red' pendant light, from £550, Rothschild & Bickers (rothschildbickers.com). 'Quartz Block' wallpaper, £137 per metre, Tektura (tektura.com). 'Strata Study' fabric by Apparatus, £133 per metre, Zak and Fox (zakandfox.com). 'Topo' rug, from £3,890, Marc Phillips (marcphillipsrugs.com). 'Fossil' table, £355, The Sofa & Chair Company (thesofaandchair.co.uk). 'Envisioned' fabric (on sofa) by Kravet, £95 per metre, GP & J Baker (gpandjbaker.com). 'Carriere' fabric, £105 per metre, Lelievre (lelievre.eu). 'Blue Lagoon' tile, £96 per square metre, Stone & Ceramic Warehouse (sacw.co.uk). 'Malachite' coasters, £78 for a set of four, Jonathan Adler (uk.jonathanadler.com)



ROCK STARS CONTINUED...

Take the strata-inspired trend to a whole new level by using its intricate patterns on your ceiling. This apartment in New York, designed by Architecture At Large (architectureatlarge.com), features a breathtaking hand painted mural by Nota Design (from £5,170; notadesign.com). It's a luxurious feature that gives the space a textural focal point and helps to draw the eye upwards, making the room feel larger.

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Gorska chair, Manu side table and Tormé floor lamp



STYLE IT UP

Quality, innovation, choice – discover fine flooring and wall finishes at up to a third off, only at Topps Tiles

One of the joys of modern interior design is that the rule book has been well and truly thrown out of the (triple-glazed, floor-to-ceiling) window. There are, and always will be, trends, but to design a modern home no longer requires you to be a slave to them.

Take flooring, for instance. New advances – from developing materials and techniques to understanding how to get the most from existing ones – mean that, when it comes to design options, we've never had more choice.

As the UK's leading tile specialist, Topps Tiles aims to provide its customers with the most comprehensive range of quality tiles on the market. In numbers, this means offering a staggering 4,500 items in a range that covers tiles, natural stone, wood flooring and associated products – all of which are available at over 340 outlets across the UK and via its thoroughly comprehensive and easy to navigate online shop. So, whether you're looking for the finest solid or engineered wood to create a sleek, Scandi-style finish;

to improve the flow from your kitchen to your patio using rustic ceramic floor tiles; or build the wet room of your dreams, at Topps Tiles you'll find all you need.

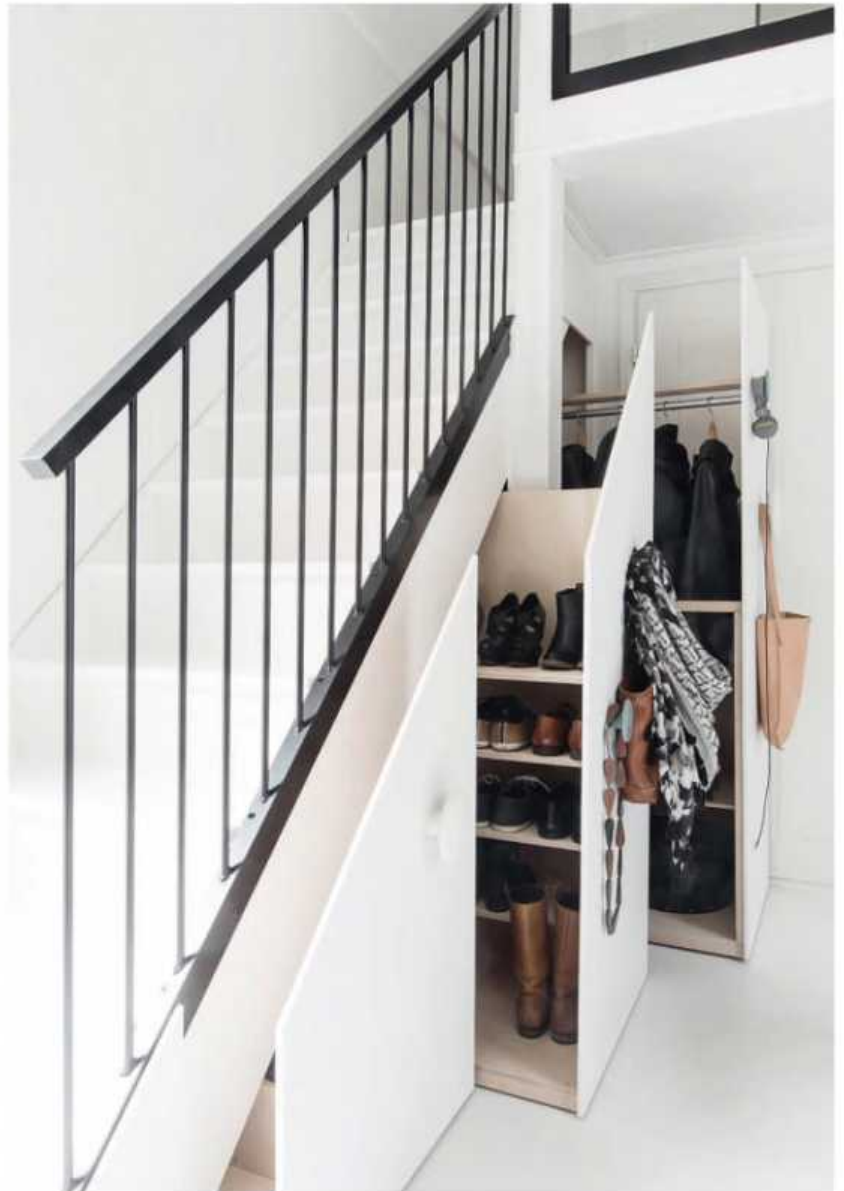
In search of a realistic-looking natural finish without the maintenance and cost of real stone? Topps Tile's constant quest for innovation makes it the perfect place to discover the new techniques that make this possible. The slate-effect porcelain 'Zelve' tiles or the stone-effect ceramic tiles in the six-strong 'Regional Reflections' range are perfect examples. They both employ leading-edge inkjet replication technology that can closely mimic the natural grain of wood or veining of stone. And every purchase comes with the specialist service and attention to detail that has become synonymous with the Topps Tiles' name.

Better yet, until 16 December 2015 there's up to a third off many Topps Tiles designs. Whether you're renovating, remodelling, or simply looking for a little inspiration, now is a great time to go in-store or online. Find out more at toppstiles.co.uk

Top left 'Silvabirch' porcelain tile in 'Tawny Shimmer', was £12.85 per tile, now £10.28 each
Top right 'Silvabirch' porcelain tile in 'Alpine Shimmer', was £12.85 per tile, now £10.28 each
Above 'Regional Reflections' ceramic tile in 'Lowick', was £10.69 per tile, now £9.08 each.
 Promotion ends 16 December

STAIRWAY HEAVEN

With a little ingenuity the area under your stairs can be transformed into anything from a miniature office to a cosy reading nook. Here are four ways to make use of this oft under-utilised space – to replicate any of these looks in your home, first locate an experienced joiner (try ratedpeople.com).



PICTURES: FOTO + WARNER, ALEXA DELAMAS/THE INTERIOR ARCHIVE



THE OFFICE

Create a whole new room, like this tucked away workspace designed by Hugh Jefferson Architects (austinarchitect.com).

THE CLOAKROOM

This Finnish home includes a cupboard, with pull-out rails and shelves, that removes the clutter of shoes and coats from the hallway.

THE READING SNUG

Why work when you can lounge? Employ a joiner (see above) to create a sofa that will perfectly fit the nook beneath your stairs.

THE BOOKCASE

Here, Ikea's 'Billy' bookcase range has been used to create a grid of perfectly fitted storage (ikea.com).

loaf



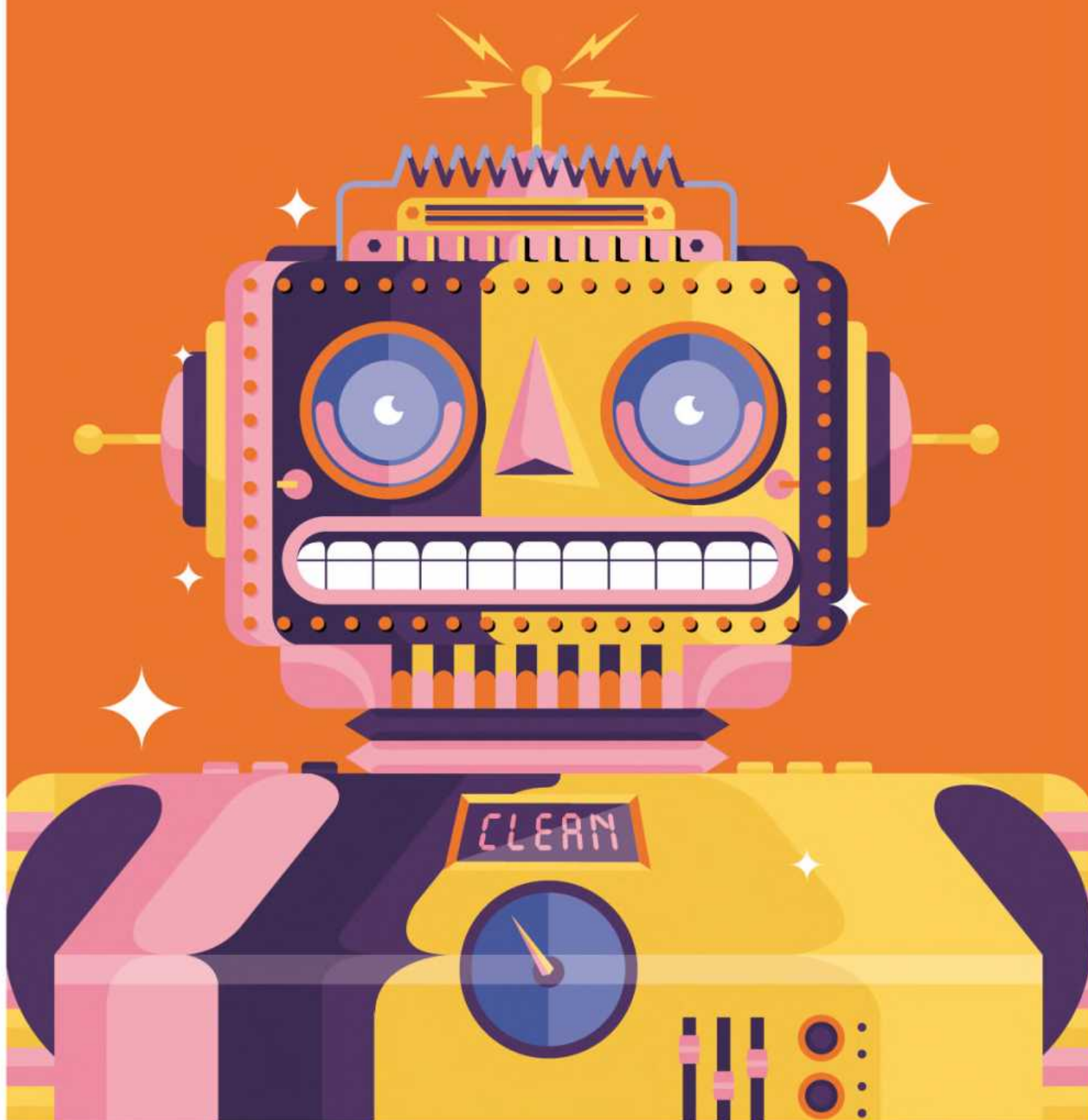
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RISE OF THE ROBOTIC MAIDS

Robots? In your home? It's the future, and it's closer than you think. Meet the subservient domestic droids eager to perform all of your dreary chores

Words **TOM BAILEY** Illustration **RADIO**



P

OPULAR CULTURE HAS TAUGHT US THAT ROBOTS are bad. The laser-red eyes, the creepy sing-song voices, the whole 'hell-bent on wiping out humanity' thing – it feels like Hollywood is preparing us for a scary, robot-run future. But whether it's out of curiosity, excitement of the new or sheer laziness, more and more of us are starting to invite robots into our homes, embracing the idea of domestic 'bots doing our chores.

The market for robot helpers is already worth £1.7 billion, and experts say that this figure is set to quadruple in the next five years. Aside from robot vacuum cleaners (more on them later), you can already buy a 'RoboSnail' (£132; robosnail.com) to clean your aquarium, a 'GrillBot' (£85; grillbots.com) to scrub the gunge off of your barbecue, and the iRobot 'Looj' (from £330; irobot.com), which clears leaves out of your guttering.

There are robot lawnmowers, too. Sales of these modern miracles are growing 15 times faster than those of traditional mowers. Options range from Honda's 'Miimo' (below), designed to trim grounds the size of Sandringham's, to the iPad-controlled 'Robomow' (from £791; robomow.com). Of course, there are robots for urbanites, too. The 'Winbot W930' (below) is an amazing gadget that vacuum-attaches to glass or mirrors and scampers up and down cleaning as it goes. It's like watching a tiny metal Spider-Man with a squeegee.

As yet, none of these domestic helpers have reduced us to a smoking pile of ashes with their laser eyes. Far from it – sales are booming. Even John Lewis sells robots (such as the Samsung

'VR9000', below). The market is growing so fast in South Korea that the government has gone as far as decreeing that every single household should own a domestic robot by 2020. The country hopes to become the world's first 'super-productive' nation, freeing its citizens from domestic chores so that they can spend more time generating national wealth and enjoying family life.

Starting to warm to the benefits? Well, the good news is that we're not too far behind South Korea. British firm Moley and designer Sebastian Conran recently unveiled the world's first 'robotic kitchen',

a pair of graceful robot arms capable of slicing, dicing, stirring and whisking with Michelin-starred precision. Moley hopes to make it available in 2017, along with an iTunes-style library of recipes. Don't fling your Magimix blender into a skip just yet, though – the 'robo chef' is expected to cost upwards of £10,000.

'When I was child, my mother took me to a millionaire's house and he had a dishwasher,' reminisces Sebastian Conran, when asked for

his take on domestic robots. 'It was a spectacular device at the time, but I imagine my reaction to it was no different to someone seeing a pair of robot arms today.' So does he think that, in 20 years time, everyone will have a robot kitchen? 'Yes, but at the moment I still prefer to cook something myself because I enjoy it. But that's the point of robots: they can help those who can't look after themselves. In 20 years time I'll be 80, so perhaps by then I'll need a robot chef.'

But back to the present for a moment. The most popular domestic robot remains the vacuum cleaner, and there are plenty to choose

The South Korean government believes that every household should own a domestic robot by 2020

ROBOTIC HELPERS 3 YOU CAN BUY NOW



'VR9000' by Samsung

This vacuum cleaner is built with advanced technology, including 10 sensors and a camera, to eliminate blind spots, meaning that it can accurately navigate your floors, avoiding obstacles and providing a no-hassle all-over clean. £800 (samsung.com/uk).



'Winbot W930' by Evovacs Robotics

Never endanger yourself up a ladder again. Simply open your window and place this gravity-defying robot on the outside. It will scan the dimensions of the pane of glass before buffing every inch of it to a 'radiant shine' using reusable microfibre cleaning pads. £330 (ecovacsrobotics.com).



'Miimo HRM520' by Honda

Honda's robo-mower will keep your lawn in check. Use the discreet wire provided to set up a fence around your garden; 'Miimo' will then automatically keep everything within that boundary neat and tidy and return to its charger when its battery is running low. £1,999 (honda.com).

from. Samsung, LG and iRobot have all honed the design of their vacuum cleaners over the last decade. So, while previous generations might have bumped around, blind to their surroundings, today's robo-vacuums feature infra-red sensors and 3D cameras to ensure accurate cleaning and reduce the amount of scratches on your skirting boards. Even heritage brand Hoover has joined the party, with the launch of its mid-range 'Robo.Com 3' (£500; hoover.co.uk).

'We bought a robot vacuum for our workshop,' says Conran. 'I fully expected it to break down, but it hasn't. The big difference that we've noticed is not so much the visual cleanliness but the improvement in air quality because the floor is kept so clean.'

Market leader iRobot has sold 10 million of its robotic vacuum cleaners over the past decade and says that the gadgets now account for 18 per cent of the market. Next year, Dyson will release the much-anticipated '360 Eye' (below). Pitched as a leap forward in home cleaning intelligence, it can scope the layout of your rooms using panoramic 3D cameras and has a super-powerful motor that's capable of picking up a speck of dirt 600 times smaller than this full stop. 'Most robotic vacuum cleaners don't see their environment, have little suction, and don't clean properly,' says inventor James Dyson. 'They are gimmicks.' The '360 Eye' also features tank tracks rather than wheels, so it can move easily from hard floors to carpets, and can be scheduled via a smartphone app.

Conran sums up today's domestic robotics scene as having 'huge potential'. 'Robots and computers started life at the same time, just

after the war,' he says. 'But while computers have made their way into our pockets, robots are only just becoming mobile thanks to improved battery life and more accurate GPS technology. The fact that we can now talk to them – and that they can talk back – is starting to make them more accessible.'

Conran's not convinced we've perfected robotics just yet, though. 'One of the problems that doesn't get talked about is the noise,' he says. 'Some robots sound like an orchestra tuning up! That's not practical in a modern home or office, when you're on the phone or

trying to concentrate. I also think it's important to manage people's expectations. When we think of a robot, we might think of something like C3-PO from *Star Wars*, which talks and moves like a human. But robotic humanoids are quite a way off – a robot with legs uses 30 times as much energy as a robot on wheels. Instead, today's robots will act as companions to us humanoids – they're the R2-D2s. It might take 20 years to get to the C3-PO stage.'

By then, say experts, domestic robots will have become multi-functional – more like personal assistants. They'll carry our bags and efficiently run our domestic lives, like a high-tech version of *Downton Abbey's* head butler. In the meantime, in order to avoid every surface in your home teeming with mechanised worker bees, it's wise to carefully pick the domestic robots that will be of the most help to you – we've selected some of the best (see below).

➤ Find more of our top robotic helpers at elledecoration.co.uk

'The fact that we can now talk to robots – and that they can talk back – is starting to make them more accessible'

...AND 3 MORE COMING SOON



'360 Eye' by Dyson

With amazing dust-collecting suction, 'go anywhere' tank tracks that easily navigate hard floors and carpet, and panoramic 3D cameras that accurately map your home, this will be a game-changing robotic vacuum. Available 2016 (dyson.com).



'Furo-i' by Future Robot

Popular in South Korea, this robot is an all-round home help. Using the *Family-Link* app it acts as a Wi-Fi-connected security camera, makes video calls and controls smart home devices, from heating to lighting. Available 2016 (myfuro.com).



'Atmobot 3' by Evovacs Robotics

This mobile air purification robot hunts out airborne odours and pollutants before destroying them using its onboard filtration system. LEDs on the top glow red when your air quality is poor. Available 2016 (ecovacsrobotics.com). **ED**

EASY RIDER

The Kickstarter-funded folding electric 'Gi Flybike' is a very sleek and sophisticated affair. The work of Brazilian designer Luca Toledo, it's lightweight and ideal for urban commutes. As well as being able to charge your phone as you pedal, it has anti-puncture tyres and a greaseless belt chain, to ensure that you arrive at meetings without black gunk on your trousers. £1,320 (gifybike.com).



COUTURE HI-FI

Linn's 'Series 5' speakers look as good as they sound. The Scottish audio firm offers its '520' and '530' floorstanding models in a range of bespoke fabrics, including Harris tweed, and prints by contemporary Glaswegian design firm Timorous Beasties (above). Every cover has a light, open weave so as not to compromise audio quality. Want to change your decor? Don't worry, the speakers can stay – simply unzip the covers, remove and replace. From £9,250 (linn.co.uk).



iPAD FOR ARTISTS

Apple's new tablet computer, the 'iPad Pro', is nearly twice as powerful as the 'iPad 2' and features a bigger, 12.9-inch touchscreen. It's ideal for artists, architects, designers and doodlers, with the pressure-sensitive Apple 'Pencil' (available soon) making it possible to write and draw by hand with incredibly realistic precision. £599 (apple.com).



COMETH THE HOUR

Time was, wearing a smartwatch was about as cool as carrying a Tamagotchi. The new Pebble 'Time Round', however, is the most discreet piece of wearable technology yet. An ultra-thin smartwatch with a customisable electronic-ink screen, this is tech with style. As well as telling the time, it can display messages and calls, control your music and charge in just 15 minutes. From £222 (pebble.com).

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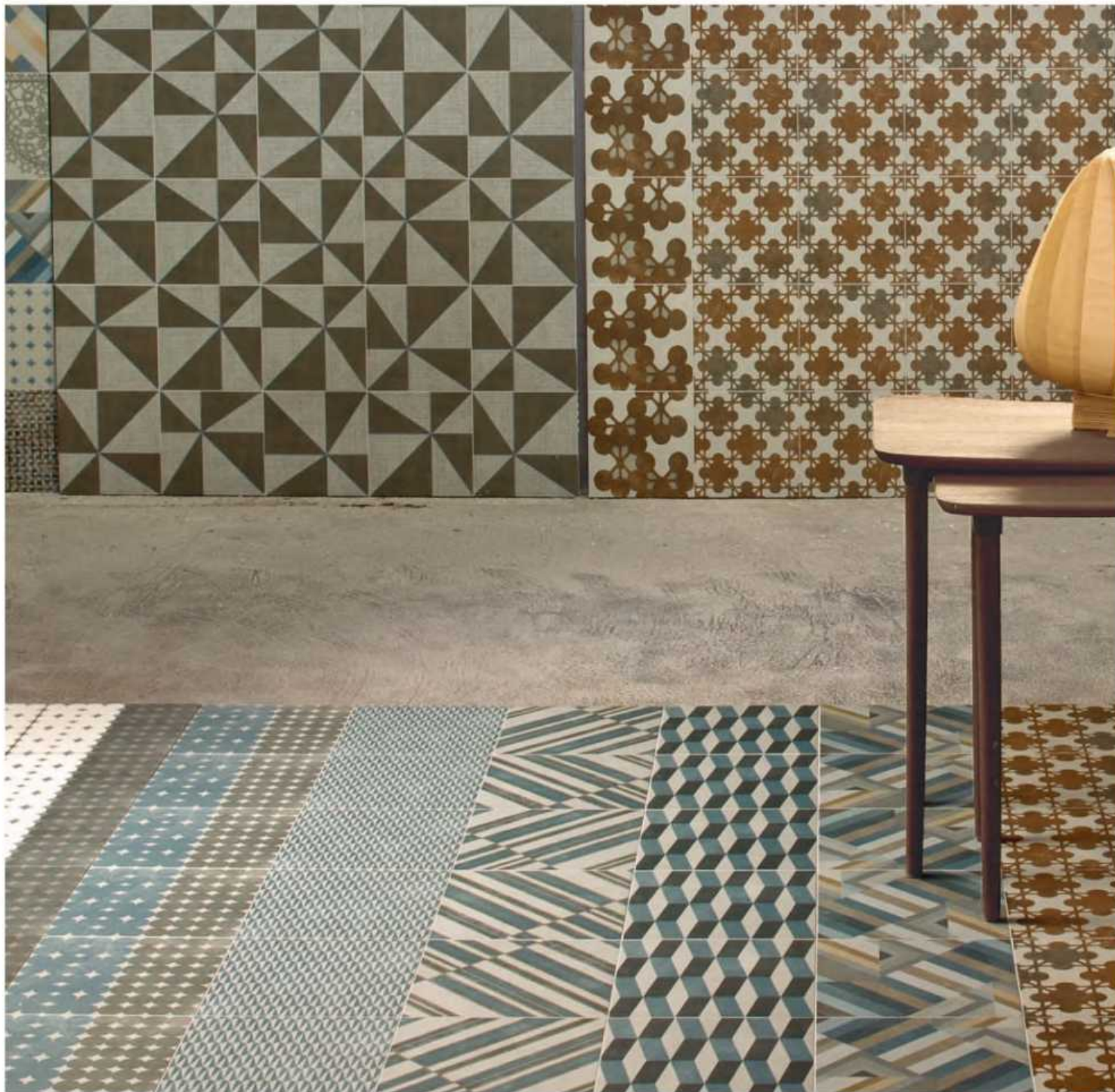
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HOME

THIS MONTH'S MOST INSPIRING SPACES



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SMALL WONDER

Reconfigured to make the most of its compact size and enviable views, this attic conversion in the heart of Florence is a stylish haven of calm for its fashion-designer owner

Words **HANNAH BOOTH**
Photography **FABRIZIO CICONI/LIVING INSIDE**
Styling **FRANCESCA DAVOLI**



Living area The white sofa is by Cappellini and the two black 'Sdraio' lounge chairs are by Piero Lissoni for Living Divani
Stockist details on p180 >



Raffaele Stella Brienza's 16th-century apartment in Florence is bijou compared to its neighbour, the Renaissance-era Palazzo Pitti. But what the fashion designer's open-plan home lacks in space is more than compensated for by its extraordinary view of the Florentine landmark, which lies on the south side of the River Arno. Even so, had it not been for some ingenious design work, the full extent of the vista would never have been revealed.

Raffaele's apartment is situated in the attic of a warehouse that once served the palace. Previously owned by two elderly women, the property consisted of a long corridor connecting several small rooms, most of whose windows were set so high in the walls that, while letting in light, they were near impossible to look through. 'I fell in love with the view,' says Raffaele, 'so, of course, the most important thing for me was to be able to see it'.

Working closely with the owner, architects Federico Minarelli and Julie Janssen – aka Fred&Juul – reconfigured the 70-square-metre layout, demolishing the internal walls and installing a short staircase leading from the living room to the kitchen, which they raised by installing a platform. Now, thanks to the absence of conventional divisions and the creation of different levels between rooms, the picture windows perfectly frame an outlook onto the large, imposing palace and the Old Town beyond.

Although the apartment is an awkward shape, the architects have achieved a sense of cohesion by designing a built-in bookcase that overlooks the living room and continues round a corner into the kitchen, where it serves as a wall of cupboards. From there, the units continue seamlessly into the bedroom, which is separated from the kitchen by a glass partition – the steel frame was coated in brass paint, to lend it a burnished look, and then polished.

'The obvious limitations of the space actually helped us,' says Julie. 'By opening up the apartment and building the shelving unit, we turned what would have been a long, narrow hallway into

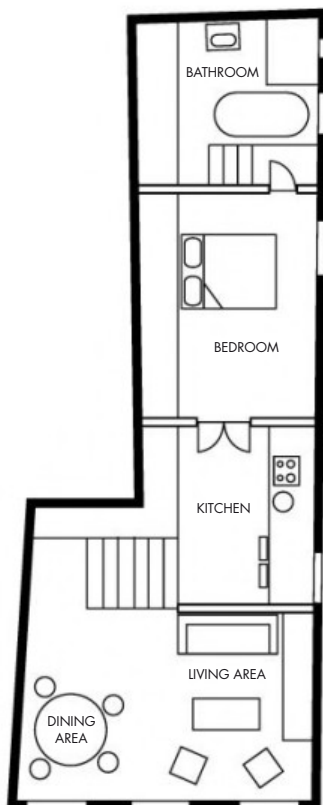
something that is useful. And, of course, it was important for Raffaele to have plenty of closet space because he owns a lot of clothes.'

The interior of the apartment has elements of Art Deco style, introduced by a monochrome palette mixed with dashes of brass and gold. 'I love the decadence of that period,' says Raffaele. The rooms are painted white with accents of black, and the floor is made of stained wood reclaimed from wine barrels. 'I wanted to use a lot of black and metallics – it's a masculine place. Because I live here alone I could indulge my tastes,' says Raffaele, who shares his home only with his beloved white dog, Sbirro.

The furnishings are an assemblage of vintage pieces and bespoke designs by Federico and Julie. These include the dining table, which is made of the same wood as the flooring but with a natural finish. When it came to sourcing pendant lights for the kitchen and bedroom, Raffaele couldn't find anything he liked. So the architects created a simple black shell in the shape of a star with a bright brass interior – 'we named it the Raffaele pendant,' says Julie.

One of Raffaele's favourite spots in his home is the dark, moody bathroom, which has a large black tub at its centre. 'It makes me happy – I can completely relax,' he says. 'It feels like being on the moon.' Julie confirms that the room was 'a real point of discussion'. 'Raffaele is a fashion designer, so he's daring. We urged him to be true to who he is.' fredandjuul.com ➤

'LUXURY IS ANYTHING THAT HAS LIMITLESS CHARM AND BALANCE – ANYTHING TIMELESS'







Kitchen The 'K65' bar stools are by Alvar Aalto for Artek. The star-shaped brass pendant lights were designed for the owner and are available to buy from architecture firm Fred&Juul
Stockist details on p180 ►



Dining area The chunky parquet dining table and stools are made of wood reclaimed from wine barrels. The chandelier is a vintage find ►



**'I WANTED TO USE
A LOT OF BLACK
AND METALLICS.
I LIVE ALONE,
SO I CAN INDULGE
MY TASTES'**



Bathroom Fornasetti candles and brass fixtures offset the look of this striking black space
Bedroom Brass framed glass partitions separate this room from the kitchen and bathroom **ED**



Velvet goldmine

Sensual and sumptuous, jewel-toned velvet is the fabric of the moment. And it's not just for upholstery – rugs and walls are also being treated to some tactile luxury

Photography **ADRIANO BRUSAFERRI**
Assistant **ILARIA BACCIOCCHI**



From left 'Calvin' bed by Enrico Girotti, £1,055, Twils (twils.it). Cushions covered in 'Harald 2' fabric by Raf Simons, £96 per m, Kvadrat (kvadratrafsimons.com). 'Gong Lux' side table by Giulio Cappellini, £1,450; 'Meltdown' table lamp by Johan Lindstén, £477, both Cappellini (cappellini.it). 'Overdyed' rug by Ezio Grassi, £1,168, Tappeti Contemporanei (tappeticontemporanei.it). 'Parvento 070' screen, £3,900, Dimore Studio (dimorestudio.eu). 'Abra' side table by Neuland Industriedesign for B-Line, £207, Wayfair (wayfair.co.uk). 'Foster Soft Love Seat' sofa by Andrea Parisio, £3,880, Meridiani (meridiani.it). Cushion, stylist's own. 'Tetris' side table by Massimo Castagna, £528, Gallotti & Radice (gallottiradice.it). 'Iron Votives' copper candleholder by Pols Potten, £32 for a set of three, Amara (amara.com). 'Sunset' vases by Manuela Di Loreto, from £95 each, Incipit (incipitlab.com). 'Orla' armchair by Jasper Morrison, £2,340, Cappellini (cappellini.it). 'Roy Lettura' floor light by Mario Nanni, £1,125, Viabizzuno (viabizzuno.com) ►





VELVET GOLDMINE

From left 'Womb' chair and ottoman by Eero Saarinen, £3,120, Knoll (knolleurope.com). 'A Floor Lamp', £420, Aust & Amelung (aust-amelung.com). 'Doria' armchair by Fendi Casa, from £3,960, Interior Supply (interiorsupply.co.uk). 'Rooms' rug by Serena Confalonieri, £469 for 170x240cm, Carpet Edition (carpetedition.com). 'Stitched City' fabric (on screen) by Jab Anstoetz, £67 per m, TM Interiors (tm-interiors.co.uk). 'Tubo' desk by Industrial Facility for TOG, £305, Heal's (heals.com). 'Quattrolati' table light by Hisham Kulhanek, £1,104, Tatotato (tatotato.com). 'Weight Here' candleholder by Kibisi, £72, Menu (menu.as). 'Plissé' mirror by Federico Angi for Atipico, from £395, Monologue London (monologuelondon.com). 'LT04 Colour' light (on floor) by Engesvik and Rybakken for E15, £1,310, Viaduct (viaduct.co.uk). 'D.270.1' chair by Gio Ponti, £550, Molteni & C (molteni.it) ►







VELVET GOLDMINE

From left 'Catilina' **armchair** by Luigi Caccia Dominioni for Azucena, £2,247, GMR Interiors (gmr-interiors.com). 'Collar' **sofa** by Rodolfo Dordoni, £9,810, Minotti (minottilondon.com). **Stool** by Ludovica + Roberto Palomba, £1,786, Amara (amara.com). 'Triangles' **rug** by Bertjan Pot, from £1,519, Golran (golran.com). 'Haiku' **side table** by Marco Zito for Saba Italia, £335, Rhoades Partnership (rhoadespartnership.co.uk). **Copper bowl**, stylist's own. **Lamp (on floor)** by Studio Lievito, £401, Pura Pietra (purapietra.it). 'LTE5 Imbuto' **floor lamp** by Luigi Caccia Dominioni for Azucena, from £702, GMR Interiors (gmr-interiors.com). Wall covered in 'Candiotta' **fabric**, £125 per m, Designers Guild (designersguild.com). **Bookcase** by Ron Gilad, from £622, Adele-C (adele-c.it). Wire **bowl** by Norm Architects, £33, Menu (menu.as). **Glass**, £6; **tray**, £40, both Tine K Home (tinekhome.com). 'Cloe' **chair** and **cushion** by Studiopepe, from £1,867, Spotti (spotti.com). **Table** by Johanna Grawunder for Glas Italia, £999, Chaplins (chaplins.co.uk). **Lamp** by Studio Lievito, £401, Pura Pietra (purapietra.it) **ED**

NATURAL CURVES

Nestled in a quiet, leafy oasis in central Johannesburg, this family home embraces its lush surroundings, which create a dramatic backdrop for its owner's treasured art collection

Words **KERRY N FISCHER/FRANK FEATURES** Photography **ELSA YOUNG**





Staircase This sculptural concrete structure emphasises the grand scale of the house
Bar area The granite wall, inspired by geometric Islamic designs, was handcarved in China; the bar itself, clad in Mazista tiles, is by architect Wilh van der Merwe; and the 'Pepe' stools are by Catellan Italia
Stockist details on p180 ►



Living area A wood-burning stove by Hergom, grey sofas by B&B Italia and mosaic side tables, discovered in Lahore, Pakistan, create a cosy yet dramatic effect
Stockist details on p180 ►





Dining room Large-scale blue 'Plass' lights by Foscarini (available from David Village Lighting in the UK) are suspended over the Matumi hardwood table
Stockist details on p180



T

his house is a triumph of form and function. Designed by South African architect Willh van der Merwe, the property stands on a large but narrow 2,500-square-metre plot in one of Johannesburg's oldest residential districts.

An ancient oak tree that stood in the grounds when the owners viewed the plot – and is now the focal point of an internal courtyard (below) – influenced the design of this Modernist building, which also takes inspiration from the East. 'I like the restraint of Eastern design in terms of materials: concrete for structure, wood for warmth and glass for light,' says Willh. 'The Japanese excel at shifting the focus of a house from the indoors to the outside. It was this emphasis on the beauty and tranquillity of the outdoors that most interested the owners when we discussed the brief for their home.'

The house is approached by a meandering driveway, which, Willh explains, 'hints at the principles of ancient Greek architecture: when the approach of a building was all about walking around it to observe its profile before reaching the entrance'.

Once inside, it is the capacious proportions of this space that grab the attention: the five-metre-high, double-volume ceilings in the main living area set the scene for the homeowners' extensive art collection – they have acquired pieces from Pakistan (their home country), as well as India, Bulgaria, Kenya and South Africa.

The muted palette used throughout helps to give this palatial space an intimate feel. Concrete surfaces and richly grained woods create layers of texture. In the bar area, a handcarved granite wall lends a decorative flourish inspired by geometric Islamic designs. Elsewhere, artworks add lively pops of colour – the homeowner requested that the antique chairs in the living area, purchased at auction, be painted a bright saffron shade.

Sprawling luxuriously over three levels, the house is wonderfully spacious. On the lower floor, every room opens onto a timber deck that connects to the pool and garden. A spiralling concrete staircase leads upstairs to where a second 'pyjama lounge' is situated – this is where the family hang out and relax. From this floor, a further flight of stairs leads up to the quiet of the bedrooms.

The rear of the property wraps around the old oak tree that so enchanted the homeowners. This living centrepiece not only acts as a 'lung' for the house, but the circular courtyard in which it stands is a wonderful light well, washing almost every room in the building with sunshine. Upstairs, the children's music room and bathroom have windows that look out at the tree's canopy.

This is a home that embraces its natural surroundings – it was the abundance of lush greenery, after all, that first drew these homeowners to this idyllic setting in the city. www.co.za ►







Kitchen Sleek handleless 'Way' units by Snaidero are complemented by the circular Carrara marble 'Ala' table by Ferruccio Laviani for MisuraEmme
Stockist details on p180 ►



'I use concrete for structure, wood for warmth and glass for light'

This sweeping concrete staircase is the focal point of the house, and was cast on site to the architect's plans ►





DESIGN BRIEF

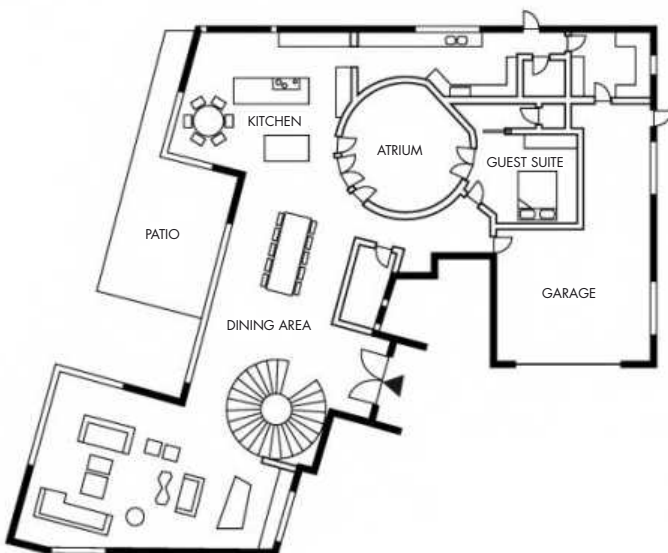
This had to be a family house.

It needed to be just as comfortable for the homeowner's teenage son and daughter as it was for them.

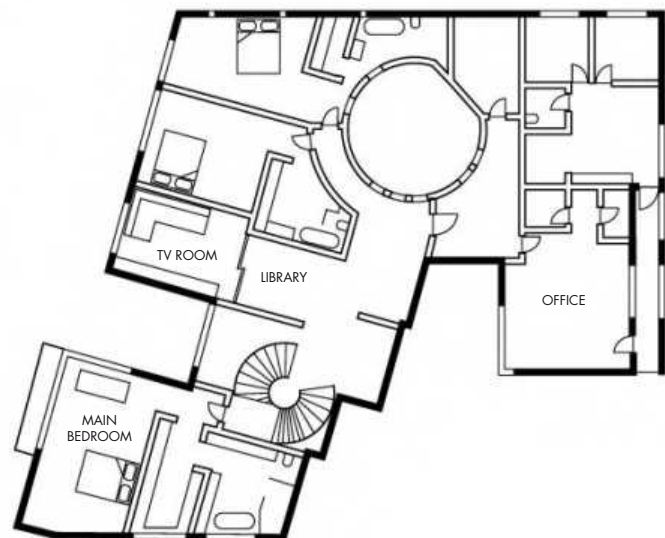
The couple wanted to live in a Modernist building that would incorporate the trees on the plot and allow for a strong connection between the house and garden.

There was no preference for a particular architectural style, but the family did specify that they wanted a design which was responsive to the site and that, wherever possible, would reduce energy consumption.

The homeowners' art collection was an important consideration from the earliest stages of planning this property. Their desire for a large main feature wall on which to hang their prized artworks proved to be pivotal to the design of the main living area.




FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



Bathroom The large wall-mounted basin maintains the clean lines in this sleek, concrete-clad space

Main bedroom A cluster of Tom Dixon 'Lustre' pendant lights create a stunning decorative feature
Stockist details on p180 

PUTTING ON THE GLITZ

The owners of this weekend retreat near Saint-Tropez have used shimmering brass accents and luxurious soft textures to imbibe their home with glamour

Words **MARZIA NICOLINI**

Photography **VALENTINA SOMMARIVA**

Living room The emerald green sofa by Baxter and curtains by Larsen pop against the dark backdrop. The space is peppered with metallic accents, such as a chandelier by Gallotti & Radice
Stockist details on p180 ►



Monica Damonte, an interior designer and owner of Italian interiors boutique Odulia, discovered this holiday villa in Gassin, France, two years ago. Perched on a hill, the property is set in a small medieval village at the heart of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. The area, while rural, is just four kilometres from the cosmopolitan port of Saint-Tropez and the French Riviera.

The villa is idyllic: built from rustic stone, it nestles within vineyards and is framed by blooms of oleander and rosemary that fill the air with a delicate scent. 'It's a magical spot for quiet holidays with my partner, Carlo, his son, Andrea, and my two daughters, Victoria and Ginevra,' says Monica. 'I immediately felt that this was a place we could escape to when we needed tranquillity.'

The family live and work in Liguria, northern Italy. As such, the



'THIS HOUSE IS A MAGICAL SPOT TO SPEND QUIET HOLIDAYS. WHAT I LOVE MOST IS SITTING IN THE LIVING AREA ON MY BELOVED EAMES LOUNGE CHAIR WHILE READING OR GAZING OUT INTO THE GARDEN'

renovation of the villa was an 18-month-long labour of love conducted in their spare time. Monica compares her interior design work to that of a tailor and was exacting in creating a flexible living space that 'would adapt to any family occasion, as well as to the changing seasons'. She has added a second storey to the house – where the guest bedrooms are located – which has doubled the accommodation to more than 200 square metres, and designed the picture windows in the living room to perfectly capture the evening sunset. 'It's my favourite time of the day. I just couldn't resist,' she says.

The scheme inside the villa is dark and dramatic, but also refined. 'I wanted it to feel as if the house was embracing us with a warm hug when we stepped through the door,' says Monica, pointing to

the seating, which is layered with luxurious fabrics including crushed velvet. 'It's our cocoon. We try to visit most weekends and in the holidays to spend quality time together,' she adds. 'What I love most is sitting in the living area on my beloved Eames lounge chair while reading or gazing out to the garden.'

The colour palette used throughout is not typical of the Mediterranean: bright shades are eschewed in favour of dark hues and rich, jewel-like tones accented with brass to elevate the look. Monica designed much of the furniture herself – the sleek kitchen cabinets are her own creation, as is the modern glass fireplace in the living room, and the dining tables both inside and on the outdoor patio. She has fused these bespoke items with carefully selected pieces from her favourite designers, most notably Tom Dixon, whose 'Fan' chairs are arranged around the table in the kitchen. 'We love gathering here for snacks in the evening. We're always keen to try the local delicacies,' she says.

The fireplace is the focal point of the living room, which is elegantly furnished to be comfortable in both the summer and winter months. 'The beauty of spending our free time here, so close to Saint-Tropez, is that we can dip into the lively Riviera atmosphere and then return to solitude and relaxation,' says Monica. 'A glimpse of the sea or the vineyards around the house is all that it takes to restore our energy. In the evening, we sit on the veranda with friends, lit by the flicker of candles, and chat long into the night, listening to the soundtrack of the chirping crickets.' monicadamonte.com ►

Opposite A pair of Fornasetti vases stand on either side of the fireplace. On the edge of the mantelpiece is a 'Taccia' table lamp by Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni for Flos. A collection of 'Form' bowls by Tom Dixon is arranged on the Baxter coffee table
Stockist details on p180





**CLASSIC MEDITERRANEAN BRIGHTS
ARE ESCHEWED IN FAVOUR OF
DARK HUES AND RICH, JEWEL-LIKE
TONES ACCENTED WITH BRASS**



Kitchen The cabinetry and table are designed by the homeowner and teamed with a set of 'Fan' chairs and stools by Tom Dixon
Stockist details on p180 ►



**'I WANTED IT TO FEEL AS IF THE
HOUSE WAS EMBRACING
US WITH A WARM HUG'**

Bathroom A large vanity unit, topped by a square marble basin, is lit by an 'OK' light by Konstantin Greic for Flos
Bedroom The metallic round side tables are from Zara Home
Stockist details on p180 ►





MY FAVOURITE THINGS

All of the rooms in the villa are designed for enjoyment. I love sitting in front of the fireplace in the living room or in bed reading.

I still remember my first visit to the house: the light in the living room at sunset was intense. I immediately felt warm and serene.

My beloved Eames lounge chair by Vitra has accompanied me on many moves and is a piece that transcends time and fashions.

I have two old Louis Vuitton trunks from the private collection of Mona Bismarck, who was an icon of American fashion. I discovered them many years ago in Capri at an antiques auction.

I can see the sea and the bay of Saint-Tropez from my bedroom window in one direction and the hills surrounded by the vineyards of Château Minuty in the other. In the morning light it's magical.

My favourite place in Saint-Tropez is the art gallery owned by our friend Andrea Preiss (preissfinearts.com). In the evening, we often dine at Banh-Hoi (12 Rue Petit Saint-Jean, 83990 Saint-Tropez), or for more casual daytime dining, we brunch at Club 55 in Pampelonne (43 Boulevard Patch, 83350 Ramatuelle).

Bedroom The black walls are complemented by a seamless row of bespoke wardrobes with large brass handles, designed by the homeowner. The floor lamp is by Flos and the rich velvet bed is by Ivano Redaelli

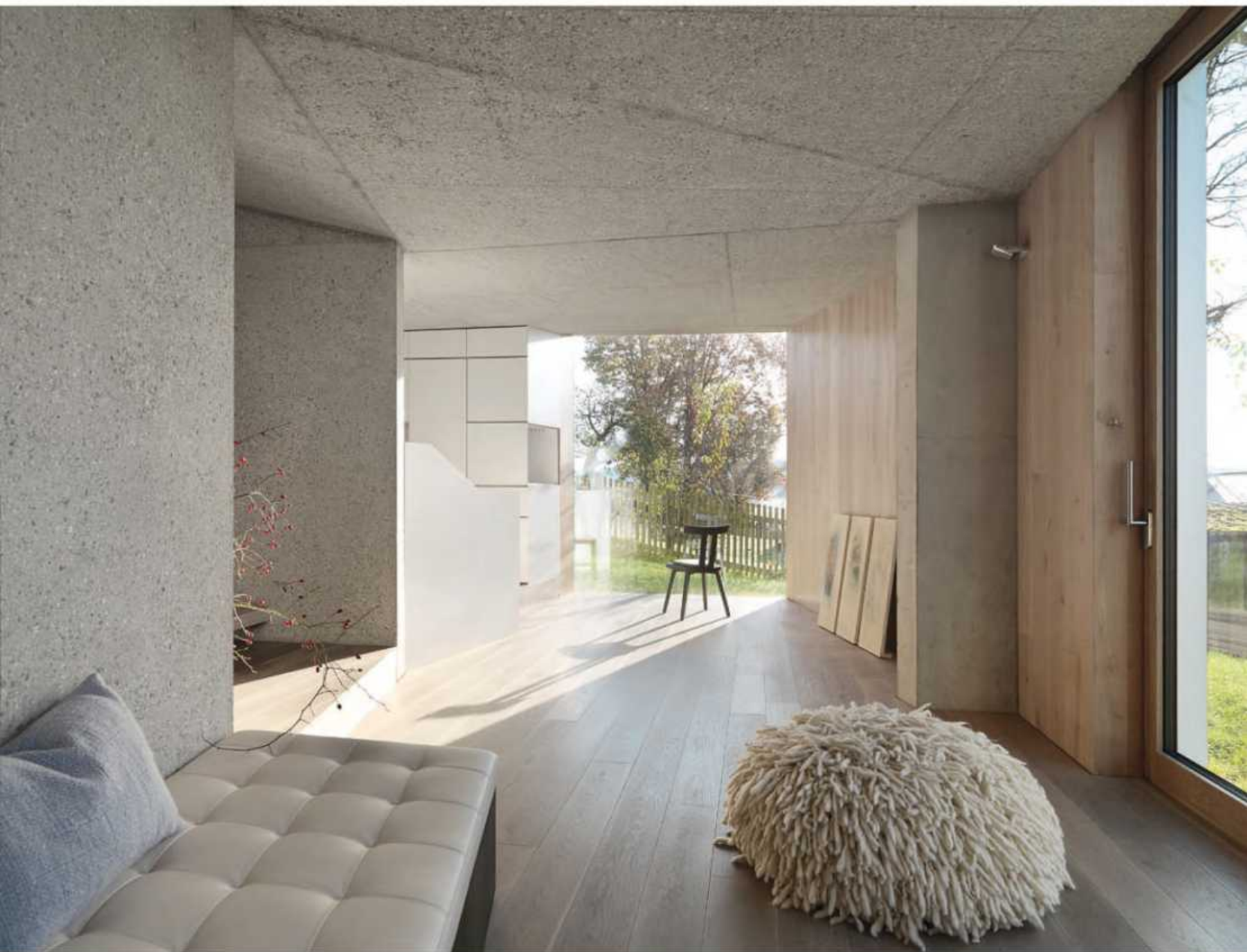
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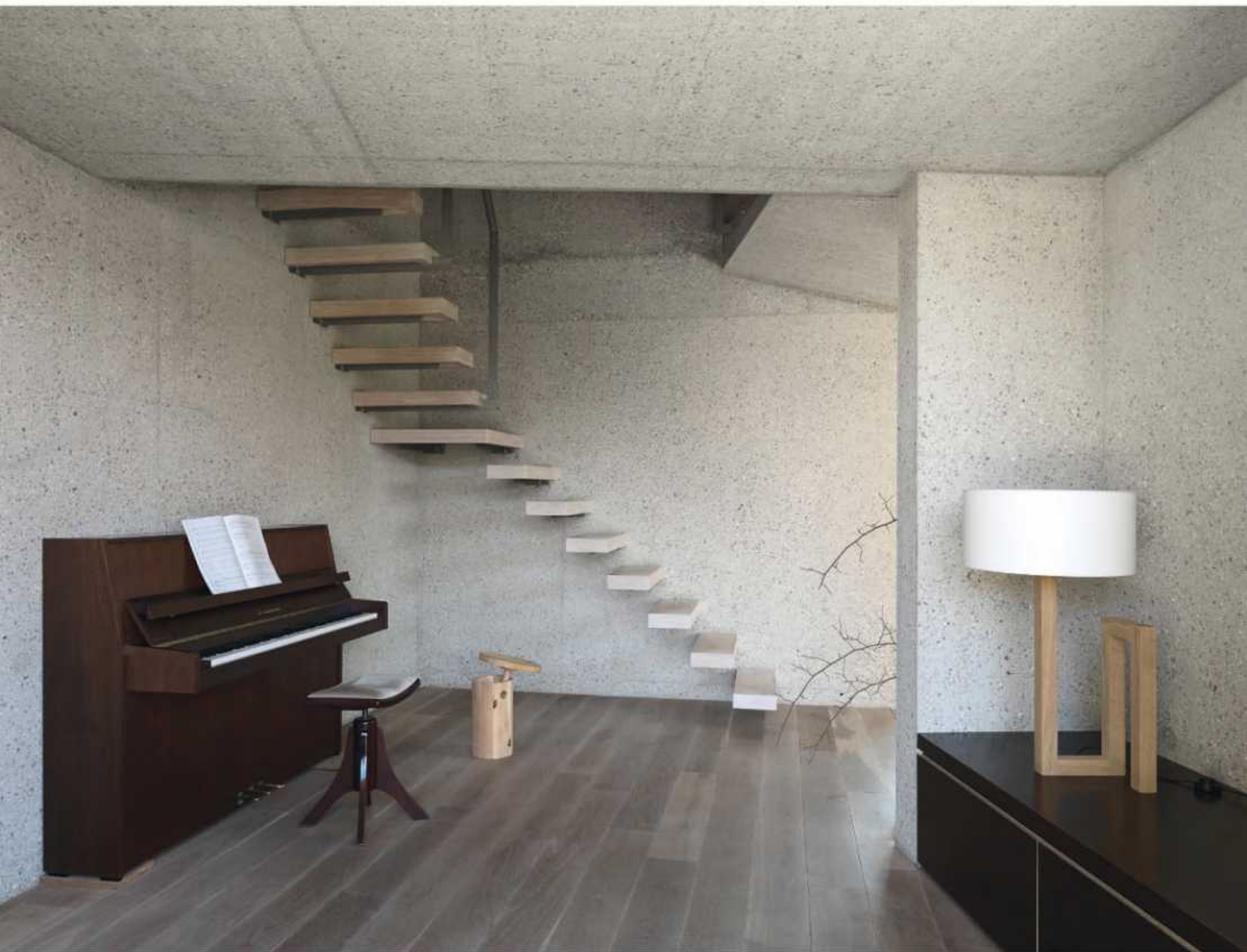
SPACE TO BREATHE

Designed by its architect owner for his young family, this serene home in Bavaria provides the luxuries of clean lines, capacious rooms and a connection with the natural world

Words **EMMA LOVE**
Photography **MADS MOGENSEN**



Living area The homeowner designed much of the furniture throughout the house, including built-in seating in the living area, where he and his family spend time relaxing and enjoying the views captured by the floor-to-ceiling windows ►



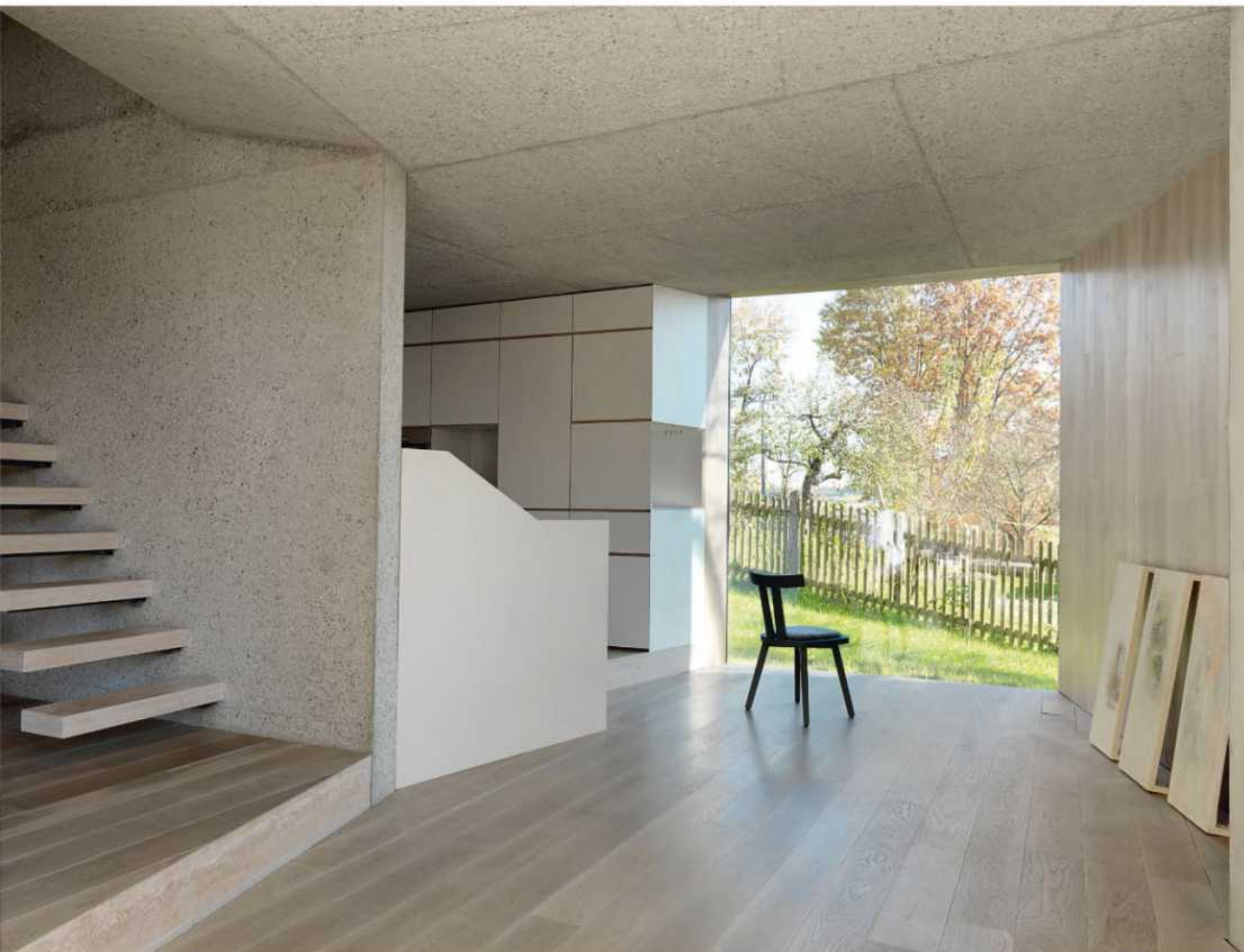
‘The walls and the ceiling frame the landscape, so when you look

Architect **Manfred Lux** is a specialist in building restoration; but when, three years ago, he secured this plot of land in the small Bavarian town of Schlipsheim, the region he grew up in, he promised his pregnant wife, Naciye, that he would build them a property from scratch. ‘There was a 19th-century house on the site that was typical of the region, but seriously affected by woodworm,’ he recalls. ‘It was not easy to convince my wife to move in – we were expecting our first child. She asked me to design a new space, so that is what I did.’ The result is this three-bedroom Modernist house, which took two years to complete.

Manfred designed the 100-square-metre property with an environmentally friendly sensibility. ‘There is little talk about energy [efficiency] within the context of housing in Germany, so I wanted to address this issue in my own home,’ he says. One look at the clean-lined building reveals his efforts: the concrete roof is covered in stonecrops and thyme, and the walls are clad in wooden

screens on the outside and concrete on the inside. ‘In summer the walls are cold and in the winter, they are warm. We do have heating, but usually we only have to turn it on for about five days a year, when the temperature drops below –15 degrees outside,’ he says.

The architect also considered the windows, which are floor-to-ceiling glass – the biggest, in the main bedroom, weighs 8,000 kilograms and was hauled into position by a large crane and six workers – ‘the other three walls and the ceiling frame the landscape, so when you look out of the window, you feel as though you are among nature,’ explains Manfred. ‘As we draw closer to winter, the sun lowers in the sky, so it shines right into the house.’ The family – Manfred and his wife now have two daughters, Laila (11) and Rosalie (nine) – also spend a lot of time outside in the garden. ‘It’s such a beautiful plot of land. We have apple, cherry and walnut trees, a hammock for reading and relaxing in, and an outdoor kitchen where we cook homemade pizza,’ says Manfred.



out of the window, you feel as though you are among nature'

Downstairs, the open-plan space consists of a living room, kitchen and dining area. 'There is no entrance hall – you enter straight into the room,' says Manfred. 'I wanted to avoid those after dinner situations when guests are leaving and they have to put on their coats and shoes in a cramped hallway.' Instead, the first thing you see upon entering is a piano placed against one wall, which the daughters can often be found playing. All the furnishings were designed by Manfred to fit his home exactly – which is just as well, as there are a few awkward corners – from the fitted window seats to the floating steel staircase. To maintain a sleek look, all of the plug sockets are hidden and the lighting is discreet.

Not surprisingly, this house has been included in the *German Architecture Annual 2015* by the German Architecture Museum in Frankfurt. 'For this building, for our own home, I didn't want to do something ordinary,' says Manfred. 'I wanted to create something fresh and different.' lux-architect.com



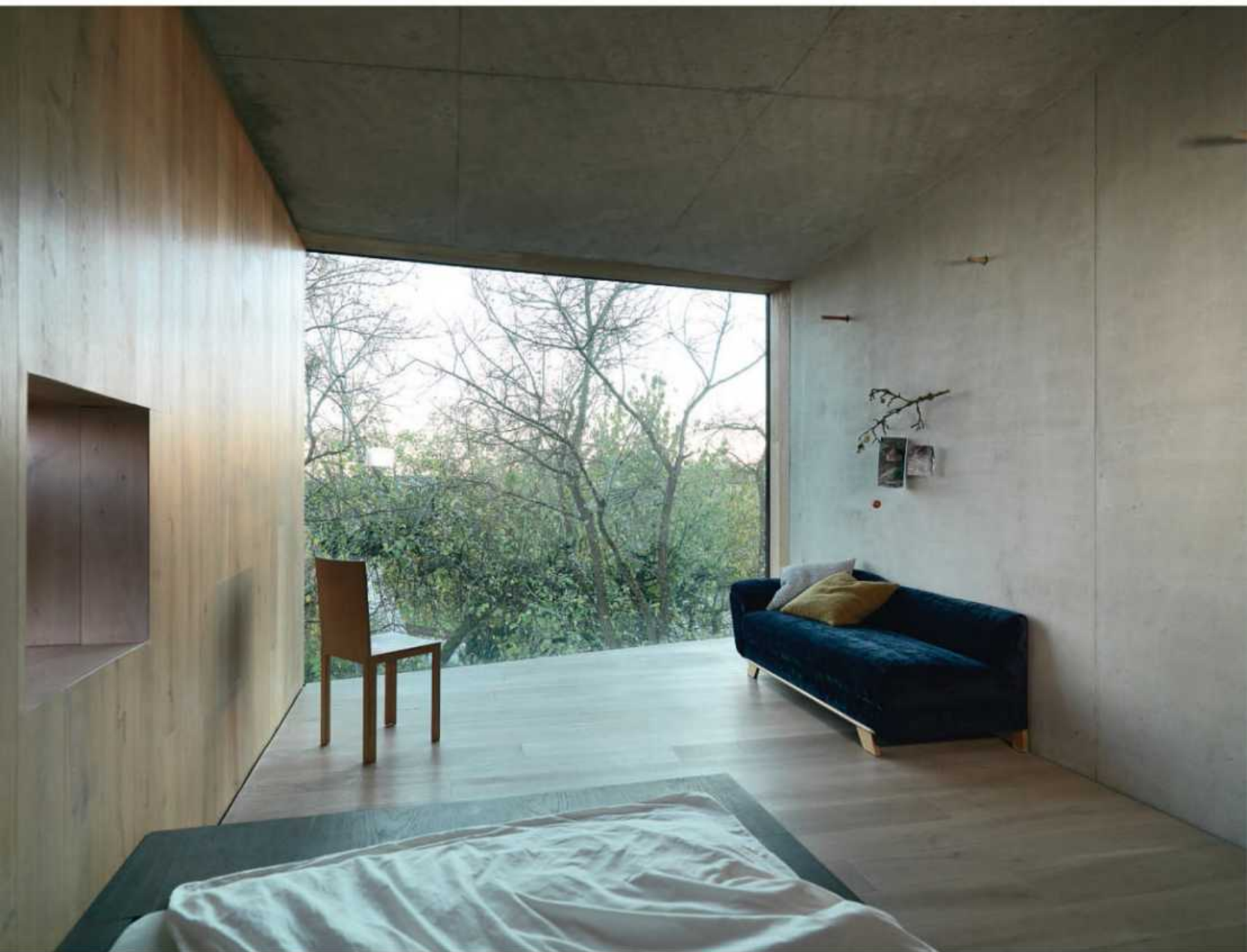
Living area The interior's clean lines are enhanced by handleless storage, hidden plug sockets and discreet lighting. The floating steel staircase was designed by homeowner Manfred, pictured left with his wife, Naciye ►



With its clever, energy-efficient design and sleek, angular aesthetic, this Modernist property is a winning combination of clarity, purpose, warmth and light

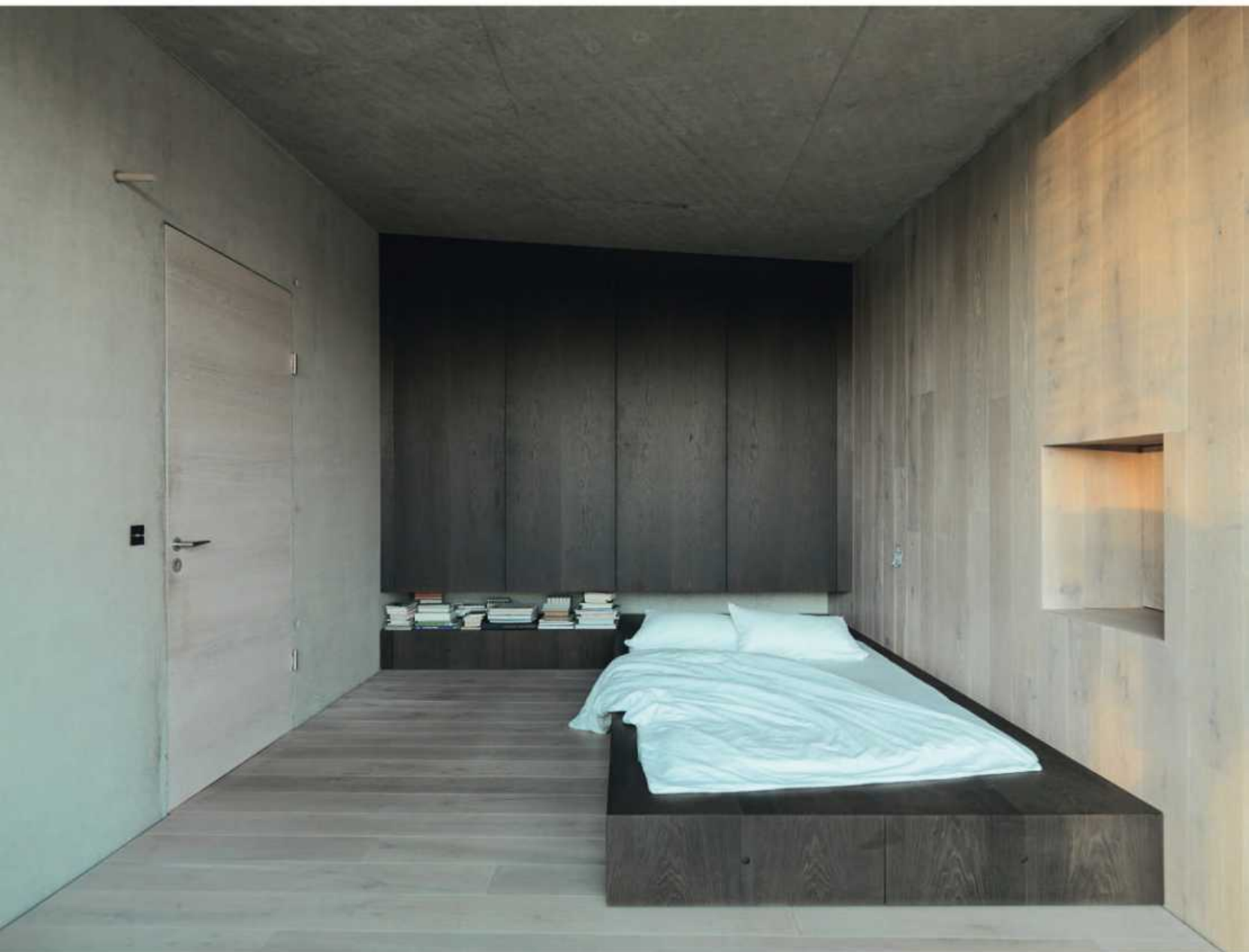


Kitchen The large dining table is made from oak and has been placed beside a large window so that the family can enjoy the view while eating (Heal's 'A-Frame' oak table is similar)
Bathroom This geometrically rigorous space is gently softened by the curves of the freestanding bath and the warmth of the wood-clad walls **Stockist details on p180 ►**



**‘As winter draws in, the sun lowers in the sky
and shines right into the house’**

Bedroom The focus of this room is its glass wall, which allows sunlight to pour in; the daybed is the perfect place from which to enjoy the view (try John Lewis for a similar design). The bed sits on a platform and storage is concealed behind wall-to-wall cupboards **Stockist details on p180**



MY FAVOURITE THINGS

I love looking at the trees. In the summer I have a view of the violet plums; in the autumn, the colours are cooler.

One of my favourite places to sit is by the Schutter, a small, snaking river nearby. Thirty years ago there weren't many animals to see around here; now there are beavers and storks.

There is a nice brewery about 10 kilometres from the house called Schwarzbräu (schwarzbraeu.de). Sometimes I go there with my family to eat traditional food and have a drink.

I like the house at night because, from our bedroom, I can see the twinkling streetlights of Diedorf, a town about three kilometres away. It makes me feel as if I'm looking out at LA. **ED**





NATURE NURTURE

Organic materials, handcrafted furniture and a pared-back palette form an airy, inspiring Italian home for one talented florist and her creative family

Words **EMMA LOVE**

Photography **FABRIZIO CICONI/LIVING INSIDE**

Styling **FRANCESCA DAVOLI**

Living area The cast-iron fireplace is a natural focal point – and homeowner Annalisa Lo Porto's favourite spot. A black slate clock found at a French flea market sits on the mantelpiece. The sofas and the coffee table are handmade ►





Florist Annalisa Lo Porto (left) shares this three-bedroom, 200-square-metre home above her flower shop, Flò, in Bologna with her fashion product manager husband, Francesco, and their sons, Lorenzo (22), a chef, and Leonardo (18), a filmmaker. 'We are the family of four Fs: flowers, fashion, film and food,' she

jokes of the creative gene that runs in the family. 'My sons grew up seeing my husband and me always experimenting and travelling, trying to look at the world in different ways. They are also independent, because we both work hard; they can see that we are passionate about what we do.'

The family relocated to Bologna from Treviso more than 20 years ago, opting for this well-proportioned, 18th-century apartment in the medieval Old Town, close to Piazza Maggiore. 'Living above the shop meant that I could work as a florist and take care of the boys easily,' says Annalisa, who worked in the advertising industry before having children. 'I also use our home for meetings,' she adds. 'When I am talking to people about making flower arrangements for events, I bring them here and we have a coffee by the fire.'

Naturally, the apartment is a fragrant showcase for Annalisa's floral designs. Seasonal, rustic arrangements are scattered throughout the space: from twigs with pretty red berries and a composition of lichen and rosehip in an earthenware bowl on the coffee table, to a vase of dried wild carrot and ears of barley in the kitchen. 'In the summer we have flowers, but for winter I try to use natural materials that anyone could find and put together,' she says. 'My work is about taking a piece of nature and bringing it inside in an easy, unfussy way.'

A love of organic textures and tones is evident in the materials that the couple have chosen for their open-plan living, kitchen and dining areas: think wooden floorboards, a gentle, mostly white colour palette, a rustic, cast-iron fireplace and furniture either made by artisans or sourced from flea markets. Annalisa describes the look as 'a mix of English and Danish styles'. The finishing touch is a series of striking artworks on the wall by Roberto Dapoto, an artist and gardener who works with Annalisa at the flower shop.

Food is another important ingredient of this family home. Francesco is usually away in Milan during the week, but most evenings Annalisa and her sons gather for dinner. Sometimes, Lorenzo cooks them all pasta – 'my mother is from Venice and my father is from Sicily, so Lorenzo loves learning how to cook different traditional Italian recipes,' says Annalisa. Later on in the evenings, the family usually drift over to the sofas in front of the fireplace, which is Annalisa's favourite spot. 'We all sit around and talk for hours. It's how I like to live – simply and spontaneously.' floflori.com

Living area Annalisa Lo Porto's floral designs for her home are seasonally based: summer is all about blooms, while during winter the apartment might contain arrangements consisting of twigs and berries, or dried wild carrot and ears of barley ►



Studio Leading to a leafy atrium, this area is furnished with a long wooden table laden with materials that the homeowner uses to make botanical arrangements, including natural hemp rope, birch bark, moss and Norwegian lichens

Living area Another smaller reception room contains three armchairs covered in a hemp fabric from the early 1900s, along with a vintage chrome lamp and a 'Cannot' side table by Cappellini **Stockist details on p180 >**



Statement columns, rough-hewn floorboards and abundant natural light conspire to give this city property a subtly bucolic ambience



Living area An artwork by artist and gardener Roberto Dapoto adorns the walls next to lengths of mottled sapling
Kitchen The open cupboards were purchased at a flea market and display handmade stoneware vases and crockery designed by the homeowner for Flò. The homeowner also designed the kitchen table, which was made by a local artisan ►





Details The homeowners son, Lorenzo (above), is a chef and often cooks for the family
Kitchen The dining table is illuminated by a series of hanging bulbs strung from simple hooks. Shiny copper saucepans contrast with the more muted tones of the homeowners' stoneware ►





A DAY IN THE LIFE

The first thing I do in the morning is drink a mug of coffee with honey. I don't like cooking much meat, only simple dishes – pasta with tomatoes and vegetables, for instance.

My perfect day at home involves curling up on the sofa in front of the fireplace, reading a book.

My most treasured items in the house are two wooden boxes in the bedroom. In one, I keep all of my family pictures; in the other I have mementos of my sons: their first hats, toys, little things that symbolise their childhood.

I like to buy food from Mercato della Terra (Piazza Elvio Pertinace, Alba CN). My son always laughs at me because I only buy bread, Parmesan, olive oil and vegetables, but they are the most important ingredients.

I spend most of my evenings working, then I relax by reading the newspaper or writing notes about the tasks I have to do the next day before going to bed.

I like that feeling you get when you return from a trip.

We love this house and we are always so happy to come home.

Bedroom Hanging in pride of place over the homeowners' bed is *From the Train*, a photo-printed artwork on cotton canvas by Roberto Dapoto. The bedlinen is from Borgo delle Tovaglie. The cosy faux fur throw was a gift from a friend
Stockist details on p180 ED





RAW MAGNETISM

Stainless steel, concrete and a restrained approach to design have resulted in this luxuriously slick home and office space in Bangkok

Words **TRISH LORENZ**

Photography **ANDERS SCHONNEMANN/CHILLI MEDIA**

Styling **LENE LYNGS**

Living room The bespoke stainless steel stair rail designed by Vaslab echoes the geometry of the building's architecture. The leather chair beside the drum kit is from Papaya, a vintage furniture store in Bangkok
Stockist details on p180 ►



T

his dramatic 550-square-metre abode in the upmarket Sukhumvit Road area of Bangkok is both a home and workplace for architect Vasu Virajsilp (left). After 10 years spent studying and working in the US, Vasu returned to Thailand in 2004 and set about designing and building this house, which he completed in 2006. 'Bangkok is like New York or London. It's very dynamic and multi-cultural; it's a 24-hour city,' says Vasu. 'I like that luxury and underground trends sit side-by-side here. You can eat in five-star restaurants but find delicious, authentic street food on the same road.'

Vasu's soaring double-height concrete home, which is framed by glass and metal, feels Modernist, but there are details, such as the pale green tiled swimming pool and the geometric lines of the interior, that also convey a subtle Thai influence. 'This is quite a conceptual design, inspired by Dante,' says Vasu. 'I think I'm more influenced by the West in my work, but I grew up in this neighbourhood and the house fits within the local context.'

The two-storey property is divided into areas of work and rest, with Vasu's growing architecture practice of 15 people based on the second floor. 'There are two staircases,' he says. 'The one at the front leads to the office and there's a private flight to the bedrooms

**'TO ME LUXURY IS ABOUT GOOD TASTE IN DESIGN,
WHICH EXTENDS ACROSS MATERIALS, SPACE AND FURNITURE.
THINGS DON'T HAVE TO BE EXPENSIVE TO BE LUXURIOUS'**



at the back of the house.' The interiors echo the bold, industrial lines of the building's exterior. The space has strong, masculine accents and stainless steel is used throughout – for the stair rails, on the base of the bespoke dining table and to create the punched metal doors that separate the living and dining rooms. Carefully chosen furnishings, such as the transparent 'Louis Ghost' dining chairs by Philippe Starck for Kartell and the modern-yet-gothic chandelier that hangs above the dining table, inject a sense of luxury.

'I don't like colourful architecture,' says Vasu. 'I think that the combination of raw, industrial materials and a monotone palette creates a more sophisticated feel.' Indeed, the house has been designed with Minimalist principles in mind. There are few objects on display and it's the architectural details – the deep concrete base of the stairs, the dark wood ceiling and the geometrically shaped windows – that serve as decorative elements. 'I like to display only things that are meaningful to me. If there are too many personal items, you lose the pared-back feel of the interior,' he explains.

Minimalist living requires a certain rigour that relies on ample storage and the personal discipline to avoid acquiring too many belongings. But, as Vasu's home shows, the rewards are worth the necessary restraint. Here, he has created a property that is all about tranquillity and the opportunity to appreciate architectural beauty without distraction. vaslabarchitecture.com

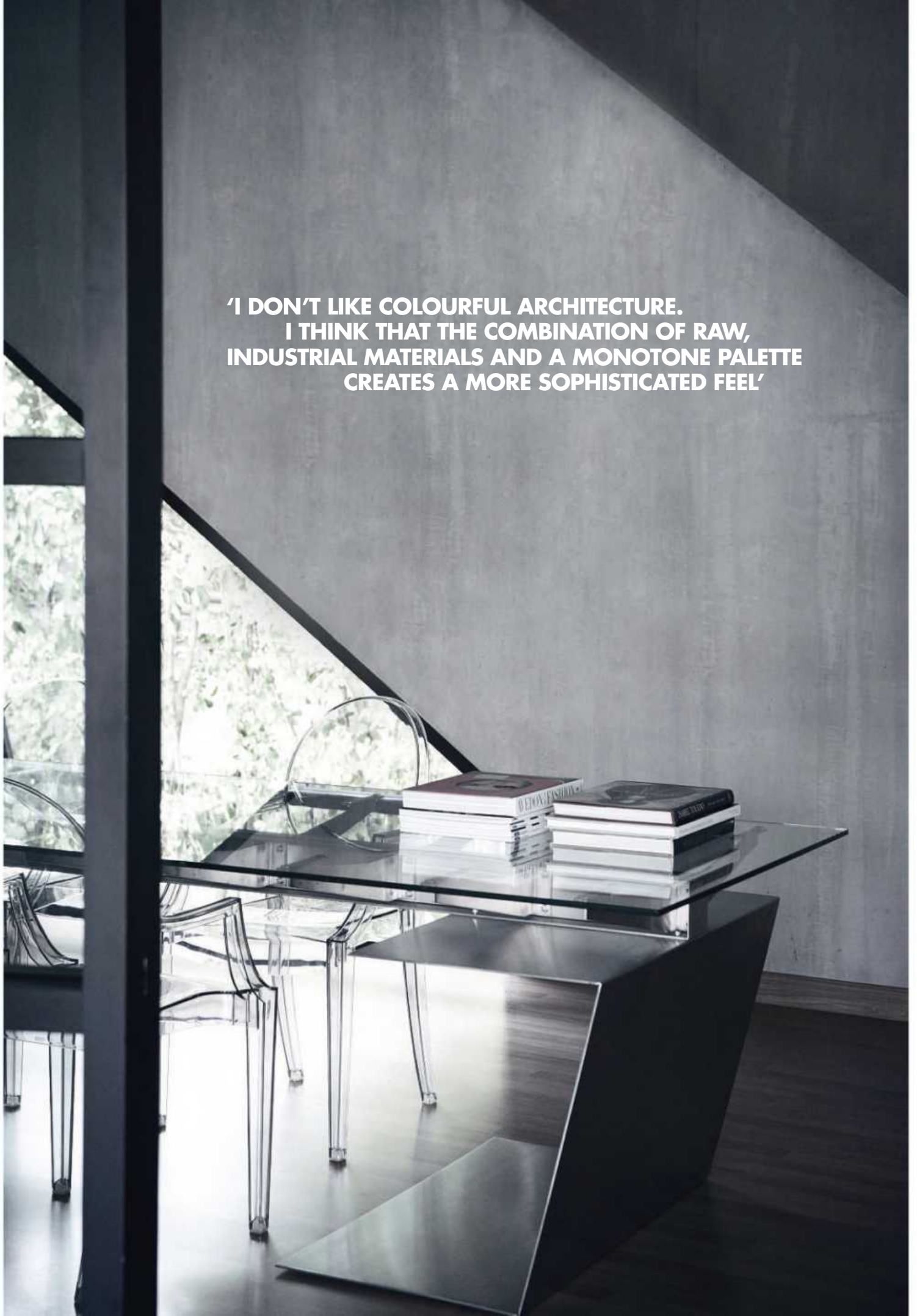


Living room The large white sofa, a bespoke design by Vaslab, is covered in a textured throw and cushions from Bangkok interiors store Casa Pagoda. The 'LC4' chaise longue is a Modernist classic designed by Le Corbusier, Charlotte Perriand and Pierre Jeanneret for Cassina in 1928
Stockist details on p180 ►



Dining room The glass table, with its striking stainless-steel base, is by architecture firm Vaslab. It is surrounded by transparent 'Louis Ghost' chairs by Philippe Starck for Kartell (available at John Lewis in the UK) **Stockist details on p180 ►**

**'I DON'T LIKE COLOURFUL ARCHITECTURE.
I THINK THAT THE COMBINATION OF RAW,
INDUSTRIAL MATERIALS AND A MONOTONE PALETTE
CREATES A MORE SOPHISTICATED FEEL'**



MY CITY

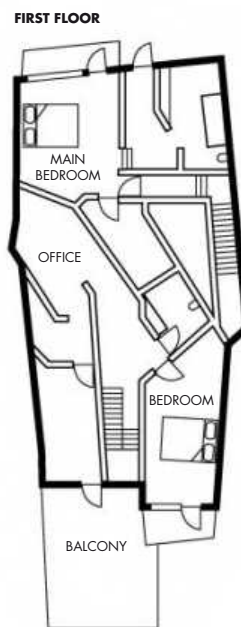
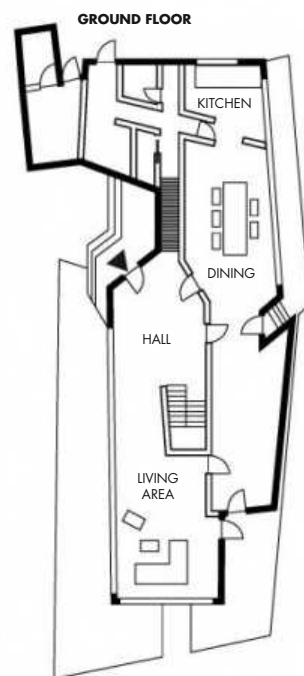
I love the dynamic energy of Bangkok. I grew up in this area of the city. There are some hip new restaurants and shops, but overall it is still as peaceful as it was thirty years ago.

In the morning the first thing I do is read the newspaper with a cup of coffee. Last thing at night, I quickly check Instagram and Facebook.

I've got an old turntable and a big vinyl collection. I like to relax in the living room whilst listening to 1980s music.

I like to visit the local Rocket Coffee bar (46, 21/13 Klang Alley, Watthana; rocketcoffeebar.com). My favourite restaurant is an Italian place called Appia (20/4 Sukhumvit 31; appia-bangkok.com), but there is also a great noodle eatery called Wattana Panich Beef Noodles that's been open for decades (336–338 Soi Ekkamai, Sukhumvit 63).

I tell my guests to head to Thong Lor. It's one of the new cool districts in Bangkok, with plenty of bars and nightclubs.



Bathroom The tub is built into a concrete platform under the window. The metal candleholder from Casa Pagoda (left) adds some Thai glamour to the scheme

Bedroom For similarly crisp bedding, try The White Company. The chair is a moulded plywood design by Charles and Ray Eames for Herman Miller

Stockist details on p180 ED



A photograph of a bohemian dining room. In the foreground, a rustic wooden dining table is surrounded by several chairs, including a black Eames-style chair and a wooden chair with a metal frame. A large, dark, textured vase sits on the left. A large, ornate chandelier hangs from the ceiling. The background features a large window with sheer curtains, a white radiator, and various decorative items on the wall and windowsill.

Bohemian rhapsody

From Chinese ornaments and Moroccan textiles to flea-market finds that reveal their owner's love of French style, this Copenhagen apartment takes inspiration from every corner of the globe

Words **HANNAH BOOTH**

Photography/Styling/Production **IBEN & NIELS AHLBERG**



Dining room A vintage French Empire crystal chandelier (try G&P Cohn for similar) is juxtaposed with a rustic table made from timber planks. The striking painting on the wall is by artist Kastanje Andersen
Stockist details on p180 ►





I must have been French in a past life,' says fashion designer and interiors store owner Maria Toft (right), who has her own clothing label called Etc Etc. 'I love everything about France. Whenever I visit, I feel as if I've come home.'

Although Maria's actual home is Copenhagen – in a grand apartment that she shares with her son, five-year-old Noah – you could be forgiven for thinking that it's located in a *soignée* corner of Paris. From the outside, the turn-of-the-century apartment block in Frederiksberg looks as if it has been lifted straight out of Le Marais. Inside, Maria's eclectic decor is reminiscent of early 20th-century bohemian

Parisian salons. Reminders of France are scattered throughout – an Eiffel Tower here, a glass panel from a wine shop there, and pretty lace curtains that waft in the breeze at the windows.

But as well as being a true Francophile, the designer also adores her own neighbourhood in the Danish capital, which has some of nearby Vesterbro's hipster energy but with a little more upscale elegance. 'It's a really beautiful part of the city,' says Maria. 'There are nice parks and cool cafes to hang out in – lots of actors and young families live here.'

Maria travels regularly, often with Noah. The pair visited Morocco this spring, and returned with a haul of rugs, poufs, cushions and African



Despite the proliferation of objects, the interior feels uncluttered thanks to its classic white walls and parquet flooring

masks, some of which will find a temporary home in her interiors store, Boho Habits, which opened in June. Her apartment is a treasure trove of curiosities: French flea-market discoveries are paired with Chinese sculptures and picture frames are propped casually against the wall, while an arrangement of vintage mirrors is the focus in the dining room (left). Everywhere there are unusual objects in unexpected places – a palm tree stands proud on the kitchen table and an ornate crystal chandelier hangs over the weathered trestle dining table. This blend of styles creates a home that is filled with life and inspiration.

Despite the proliferation of objects, the interior does not feel cluttered, thanks to the simple backdrop of white panelled walls, classic parquet floors, old stucco detailing, high ceilings and picture windows. 'I've never lived in such a white space before,' Maria says. Her style may have many outlets, but her home is an extension of herself: laid-back, global and bohemian. 'It's an apartment full of stories,' she says. bohohabits.com

Dining room Classic black 'DSW' chairs by Charles and Ray Eames for Vitra (try The Conran Shop in the UK) are part of the mismatched ensemble gathered around the table. The homeowner bought her antique Moroccan rug at a souk in Marrakech (try Francois Gilles for similar). Vintage mirrors create an unusual focal point on the wall **Stockist details on p180 ►**



The house is a treasure trove of curiosities, with unusual items in unexpected places



Dining room The vintage dresser is filled with mismatched crockery and a Royal Copenhagen dinner set. Find similar lace curtains on Etsy

Living area A yellow antique armchair and simple weathered stool form a cosy reading spot, surrounded by vintage ephemera. The sofa is from Nordic design brand Bolia **Stockist details on p180 ►**









Kitchen A marble-topped table is paired with industrial-style stools (try Rockett St George for similar)

Bedroom A grey headboard and delicately patterned wallpaper create a French boudoir-style look

Details A mini model of the Eiffel Tower and a Champagne sign betray the owner's love of Paris
Stockist details on p180



MY FAVOURITE THINGS

I love my yellow velvet armchair, which I found on my last trip to Toulouse when visiting my father. When I have a moment's peace I like to sit in it, right beside the window, and read.

My favourite memory here is of my 40th birthday. I had a big dinner party at the house for all of my friends with good food and lovely wine. I decorated the whole apartment for the occasion myself and we had a blast.

One of my most cherished pieces is a beautiful antique church candleholder that I inherited from my mum: it's decorated with pale roses.

It's wonderful here when the light from the setting sun floods the living room and glides over the window seat.

I like the view from the window that looks out to the most amazing little park around the corner. I often visit – it's like entering paradise. It has big trees, flowers and ducks, and is so well kept. **ED**



ARTS & CULTURE • BOOKS • ARCHITECTURE • TRAVEL

ESCAPE



IF YOU VISIT ONE EXHIBITION THIS MONTH...

'THE WORLD OF CHARLES AND RAY EAMES', A MAJOR NEW

EXPLORATION of the work of two of the most important designers of the 20th century, recently opened at the Barbican and is not to be missed. The most definitive and wide-ranging display of the couple's work to date has been three years in the making and features room sets, models, films and original artworks. Until 14 February 2016; turn the page for an exclusive ticket offer (barbican.org.uk).

PICTURE: EAMES OFFICE

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EAMES AT THE BARBICAN

Developed in collaboration with the Eames Office and members of the Eames family, and curated by design specialist Catherine Ince, the Barbican's new exhibition includes letters between Charles and Ray, experimental furniture from the couple's early days together and a prototype of their 'La Chaise' lounge, on loan from the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The show also places the duo's work in context, highlighting their interest in technology, science and education to demonstrate their ongoing relevance to design today. 'The World of Charles and Ray Eames', until 14 February 2016 (barbican.org.uk).

Clockwise from above A room set collage by Ray Eames (1949); the design duo (1957); Charles with the iconic lounge and ottoman (1956); 'Ball' clock (1948); a still from *Traveling Boy* (1950), a film by the couple; Eames-inspired 'Geometry' notebooks by Tom Pigeon; the exhibition catalogue; the famed 'DSW' side chair (1950); 'House of Cards' mug



barbican

EXCLUSIVE

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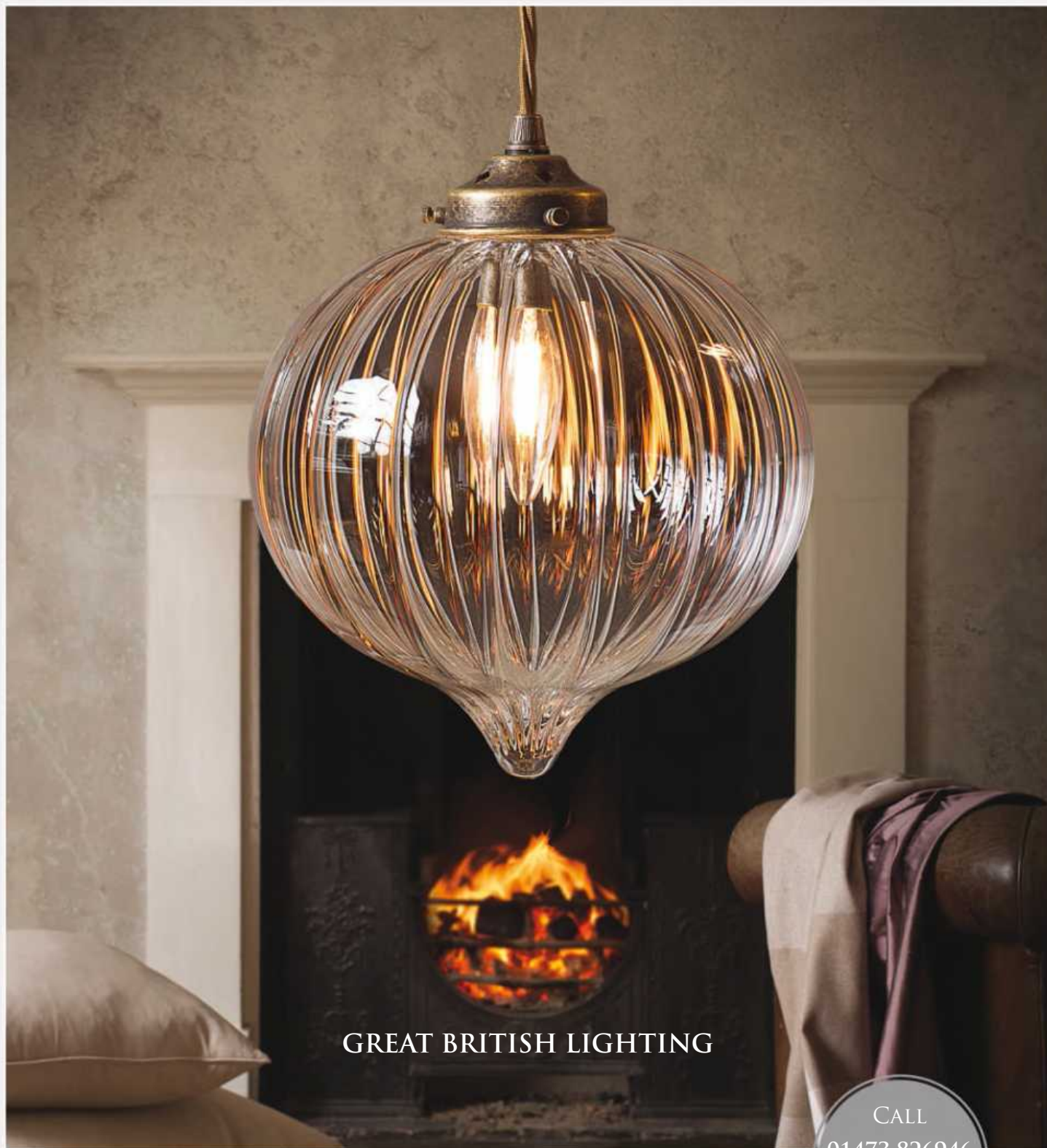
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PEDAL POWER

Thanks to soaring numbers of commuters taking to two wheels, the success of Team GB's cyclists at London 2012 and the arrival of stylish bike shops serving mean flat whites, cycling is a hot trend. 'Cycle Revolution', a new exhibition at the Design Museum, celebrates the movement. Classic Pinarello models and accessories belonging to Sir Chris Hoy and Paul Smith will be on display, as well as Brompton models (above). 18 November – 30 June; tickets £14 (designmuseum.org).



BLACK, WHITE AND READ ALL OVER

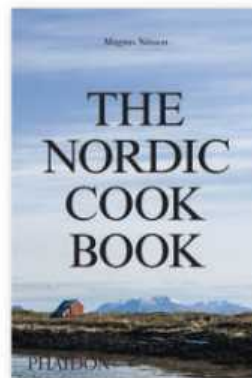
We take our hats off to Penguin, which continues to safeguard the future of the printed word via beautiful and imaginative editions of classic books. New out is *The Penguin Book of the British Short Story* (above; £50), an anthology held in two perfect cloth-bound volumes. Featuring works by everyone from Zadie Smith to Charles Dickens, its gunmetal-grey and black jackets are emblazoned with a classic typeface (penguin.co.uk).

Also out this month is a limited-edition box-set of all 80 of Penguin's Little Black Classics – miniature books printed in understated black and white (£80; or 80p per book). Curl up with Flaubert's *A Simple Heart* or Kate Chopin's *A Pair of Silk Stockings* – could there be a more appealing antidote to the whirlwind of Christmas parties?

WORDS: CHARLOTTE BUCK

COOKBOOKS OF THE WORLD, UNITE

These four adventurous recipe books recreate the pleasures of travel through their globally inspired dishes and gorgeous imagery



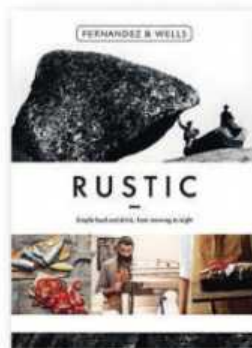
The Nordic Cookbook (Phaidon, £29.95) is a beautiful compendium of landscapes and larder recipes inspired by Swedish über-chef Magnus Nilsson's travels across Scandinavia. Recipes for classic north-European fare – such as lingonberry jam and spiced meatballs – sit alongside ones for less familiar dishes, including rosehip soup and juniper and honey beer.



NOPI: The Cookbook (Ebury Press, £28) offers fans of Yotam Ottolenghi's 'most restauranty restaurant', Nopi in London's Soho, the chance to recreate its Middle Eastern-inspired dishes at home. Colours and flavours abound – think baby artichokes with pink peppercorn aioli or black rice porridge with snowy white coconut milk.



Fig & Olive: The Cuisine of the French Riviera (Assouline, £32) is food escapism at its best: step out of cold British climes and onto the French Riviera via beautiful sun-drenched photographs, fresh, delicious recipes and insider tips (such as how to find the ripest melons at the market, just by looking at them).



Fernandez & Wells: Rustic (Hardie Grant, £20) is the first book by Jorge Fernandez and Rick Wells, co-founders of a successful chain of Spanish-meets-British cafes and wine bars – of which there are now six in London. The caffè cortado might be best left to the baristas, but the book also includes easy bakes such as breakfast manchego and chorizo omelette and Eccles cakes.



INDIAN WINTER

What could blow away the cobwebs of dark autumn days better than an influx of Indian tastes, textiles and texts? We've compiled a to-do list for the season that's sure to brighten your mood.

Visit The V&A's flagship exhibition 'The Fabric of India' (2 and 3, 3 October–10 January; vam.ac.uk) is a fascinating exploration of textiles as clothing and currency. Elsewhere, Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum is displaying Indian treasures for 'Asia in Amsterdam' (1 and 4, 17 October–17 January; rijksmuseum.nl), including pieces from the era of the Dutch East India Company.

Dine London's hottest contemporary Indian restaurants Dishoom and Gymkhana have both opened new outposts. Dishoom's courtyard cafe is located off Carnaby Street in Kingly Court (dishoom.com), while Hoppers (jksrestaurants.com), an informal eatery on Frith Street by the siblings behind Gymkhana, is inspired by Sri Lanka's roadside kiosks.

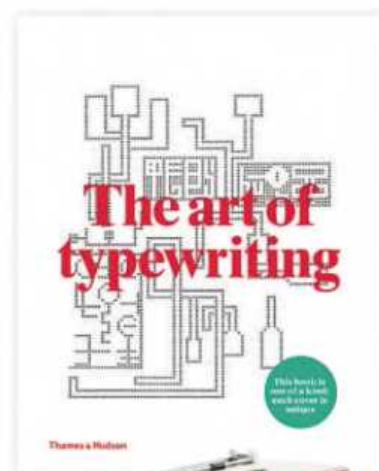
Read Revel in the dazzling craftsmanship of architecture, art, temples and trinkets from Rajasthan – aka the 'Land of Kings' – in Assouline's lush new book *Rajasthan Style* (5, Assouline, £55). It's a work of art in its own right and will have you dreaming of Delhi.

Book ahead The Jaipur Literary Festival promises books, Bollywood and blazing sun. Held in January, this is a hot ticket. This year's stellar roster of speakers includes Margaret Atwood, Anjum Hasan and Stephen Fry (6, 21–25 January; jaipurliteraturefestival.org).



OUR TYPE OF WRITER

An insider piece of information: at *ELLE Decoration*, all magazine articles are first filed in Courier, the font that echoes the original serif script of the typewriter. And with an electronic typewriter that took Kickstarter by storm now in production (the Freewriter, a 'distraction-free writing tool' comprised of mechanical keyboard, e-ink screen and automatic cloud back-up; astrohaus.com) and Urban Outfitters selling original 1970s typewriters, such as the pretty pink 'Travel-Riter Deluxe' by Remington (below, £220), it seems that this retro writing tool is having a real moment. If you're not ready to invest in one yourself, delve instead into 'The Art of Typewriting' (Thames & Hudson, £39.95), a beautiful new compendium cataloguing the device's impact on everything from admin tasks to artwork.





3 OF THE BEST VISUALLY DAZZLING THEATRE SHOWS

FUNNY GIRL Brit star Sheridan Smith will play the lead role in this sassy and stylish new revival of the hit Broadway musical that launched Barbra Streisand's career. 20 November–5 March, tickets from £29 (www.menierchocolatefactory.com).

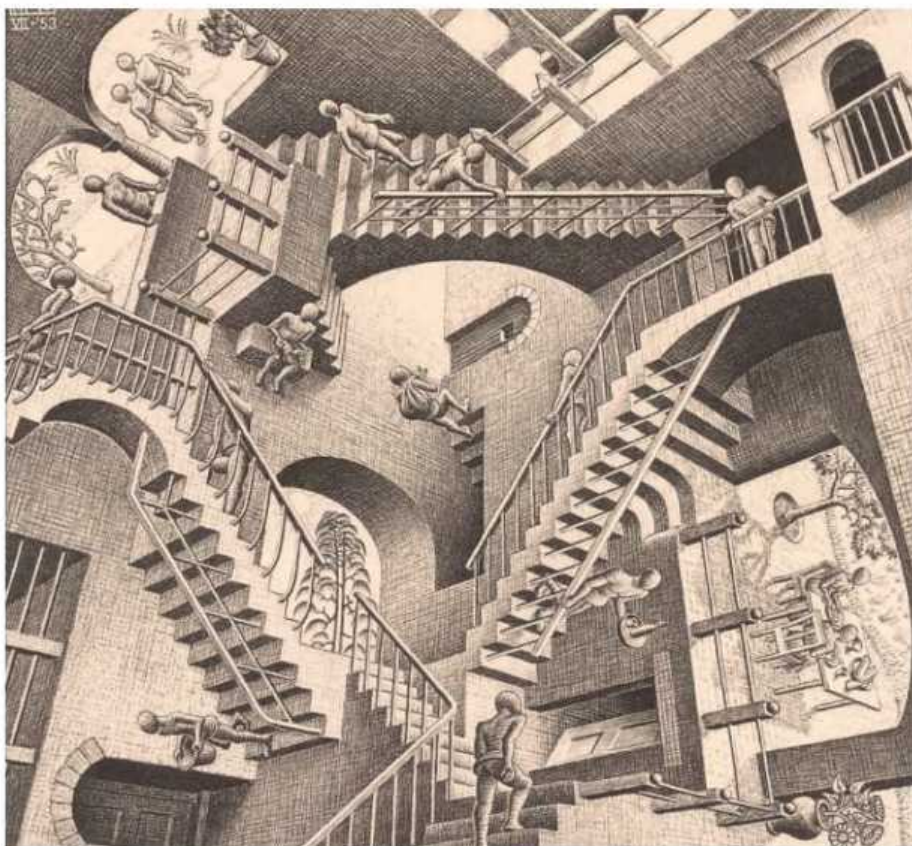


SLEEPING BEAUTY Choreography legend Matthew Bourne's spectacularly gothic production of this ballet classic returns to London's Sadler's Wells by popular demand, with a new special 'surround-sound' set design that renders the Tchaikovsky score immersive and modern. 1 December–24 January, tickets from £12 (sadlerswells.com).



THE ODYSSEY: MISSING PRESUMED DEAD Plays in the intimate Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at Shakespeare's Globe are performed by candlelight. Your excuse to visit this month is a political piece by British poet Simon Armitage – it dabbles in both fact and fiction, but remains convincing. 3–14 November, tickets from £15 (shakespearesglobe.com).

Visit this The Artist Open Houses Christmas festival is the perfect place to pick up a special Christmas gift. Sculptors, jewellers, potters and print-makers in Sussex towns Brighton, Hove and Ditchling will be opening the doors to their homes and studios every weekend from 21 November to 13 December (aoh.org.uk).



THE ABSTRACT ARCHITECT

A lesser-known fact about famous Dutch graphic artist Maurits Cornelis Escher (1898–1972) is that he started out training as an architect. Indeed, our favourites of his chimerical prints are the interiors and architecture-based lithographs (such as 'Relativity', left), which are structurally immaculate, but laced with flights of fantasy. This month, head down to south London's Dulwich Picture Gallery, where a large show of Escher's extraordinary prints, woodcuts, lithographs and watercolours is on display. The show includes some of the draughtsman's most recognisable and mind-bending pieces, as well as a range of interesting archive material. 'The Amazing World of MC Escher', until 17 January (dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk).

WORDS: CHARLOTTE BROOK. PICTURES: ERIK SMITS, V&A MUSEUM, MANISH ARORA/PIRELLA GÖTTSCHE LOWE, WALTER SIVER, SIMON ANAND, PETE WATKINS/SHAKESPEARE GLOBE TRUST, GETTY, THE MC ESCHER COMPANY

THE GIFT OF GIVING

Handsome, homemade presents are magnificent things. Here, we round up the best courses and workshops where you can learn to create something beautiful to give to someone special this Christmas. No experience necessary!



SCENTED CANDLES

Tucked in a quiet Belgravia mews house is the serene atelier of candle-maker Rachel Vosper, who offers private courses for groups on an on-demand basis. You'll be greeted at the start of your lesson with a glass of Champagne, asked to choose a scent from the library of fragrances, and then Vosper will impart the basic skills of making a candle from scratch; you'll take your creation home in a beautiful glass vessel. £600 for up to six people; open courses for individuals are held on a Saturday once a month, £100 per person (rachelvosper.com).



CHRISTMAS CAKE

All the glorious goodies served at Gail's London cafes are devised at its open-plan pastry kitchen in Blackheath. This winter, budding bakers are invited to the stylish HQ for a festive cooking class. Make and take home mince pies, gingerbread and a mega Christmas cake that will be boozy, fig-filled and wrapped with ribbon. £80 per person; 14 and 27 November, 5 and 10 December (gailsbread.co.uk).



GIFT LABELS

For those not blessed with the flawless handwriting required for beautiful gift labels, book in for a workshop in modern calligraphy or contemporary brushed lettering with stylish stationer Quill London, at its pop-up in London store West Elm. Materials are all supplied, along with coffee and lively conversation. From £49 for beginners modern calligraphy course (quilllondon.com).



FESTIVE FLOWERS

Head south to The Pullens Yards, a cluster of 60 live/work studios that are opening their doors to the public on 4–6 December. Jam Jar Flowers (which is the go-to florist for fashion brands Mulberry and J.Crew) will welcome visitors for mulled wine and the chance to put together a seasonal posy or garland (pullensyards.co.uk). Also, in Islington, Sweet Pea Flowers is taking up residence at design emporium Aria. Book now for classes on how to make wreaths and festive bouquets. £65; 1 and 8 December (ariashop.co.uk).



STOP WHILE YOU SHOP

Whether you find it exhausting or exhilarating, Christmas shopping requires sustenance – so here's our pick of newly opened eateries in London's prime retail areas that are perfect for pitstops.

In central London, escape Covent Garden's hustle and bustle by stopping for tea, tasty pies or even a stiff cocktail at **Mr Fogg's Tavern** (mr-foggs.com), a Dickensian-style gin parlour that promises a joyously eccentric refuge from the high street. Further north on Marylebone High Street, enjoy a leisurely lunch at new Basque restaurant **Lurra** (lurra.co.uk). The wood-fired grill menu is well considered, as is the design of the space: white marble tabletops are offset by azure blue and wood-clad walls.

Over in the east, a southern Italian lunch at L'Anima's more affordable sister venue, **L'Anima Café** (animacafe.co.uk), is a treat as you pause from trawling Shoreditch's design shops. Again, the decor is glorious: it's entirely kitted out in gorgeous B&B Italia furniture.

For those making a day-trip to the capital, cool new brasserie **Cambridge Street Cafe** (cambridgestreetcafe.co.uk), under red-and-white striped awnings, is perfectly located behind Victoria rail station and serves modern, garden-fresh food. We love the cosy 'club room' downstairs, where you can recoup on reclaimed furniture with a cup of excellent coffee; book into the stylish ten-bedroom townhouse hotel, **Artist Residence**, upstairs if one day of shopping isn't enough (artistresidencelondon.co.uk).

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Leicestershire - London

WELCOME TO THE CLUB

What better present is there than a year's supply of free, unlimited information and inspiration? An annual membership – be it to a museum, charity, subscription service or gallery – is top of our Christmas wish list. Here are four of our favourites



BEST VALUE Tate (tate.org.uk)

Cost £70 for one person; £110 for two

What's included? Free exhibition entry to all four Tate galleries (the 2016 calendar includes a blockbuster Georgia O'Keeffe retrospective at Tate Modern and a Francis Bacon exhibition at Tate Liverpool), plus curator talks, tours, queue-jumping rights and a quarterly magazine, 'Tate Etc'. The chic Members' Rooms – Tate Modern's has one of the best views in London – almost warrant the cost alone.

Unexpected bonus Stylish and subsidised travel between Tate Modern and Tate Britain, thanks to a 25 per cent discount on Tate-to-Tate riverboat rides.



BEST FOR TAKING FRIENDS Friends of the Royal Academy (royalacademy.org.uk)

Cost Standard Friends, £97 for one person; joint friends (membership for two people), £140; membership including access to new-look private members' club The Academicians' Room (above), £300 per year plus a £240 joining fee

What's included? Free entry to exhibitions for the member plus an adult guest; previews; extended hours' access to shows; a subscription to the 'RA' magazine; and access to Keeper's House, a favourite haunt of actor Bill Nighy.

Unexpected bonus The Keeper's Garden – which, despite its city-centre location, is a truly tropical oasis of calm.



BEST FOR ARCHITECTURE FIENDS

Royal Institute of British Architecture (RIBA) Friend of Architecture (architecture.com)

Cost £45

What's included? Membership to the RIBA includes the opportunity to enjoy friends-only guided architecture walks and curator-led tours; a subscription to the RIBA's bi-annual 'A Magazine for Architecture'; and discounts in the cafe and bookshop at the academy's HQ in London's Portland Place (just think of the coffee-table tomes!).

Unexpected bonus For this Christmas only, new recruits will receive a free print from the RIBA Collections.



BEST FOR PHILANTHROPISTS The House of St Barnabas (hosb.org.uk)

Cost £600 per year; plus recommended £100 donation

What's included? Blurring the boundary between charity, art and hospitality, this not-for-profit members' club and employment academy is located in a Grade-I listed Georgian townhouse that has been a House of Charity for the homeless since the 1860s. Its permanent art collection includes works donated by Jeff Koons and Tracy Emin; member events include a book club, live music nights and arts talks.

Unexpected bonus Access to the tiny but exquisite medieval-inspired chapel, and the quiet garden.

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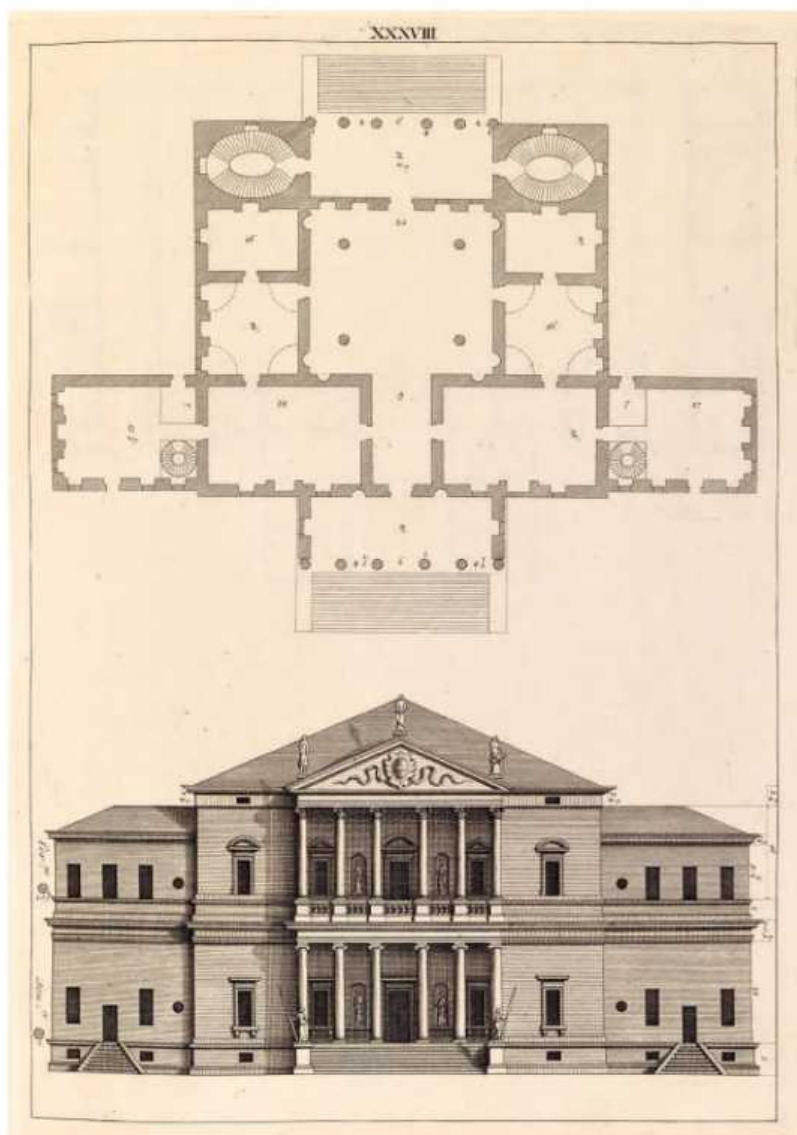
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ARCHITECTURE



REVISIT THE CLASSICS

Even if you haven't heard of Andrea Palladio, you'll be familiar with his style. The 16th-century Italian is an icon of Western architecture, who revived Greek and Roman design principles and spearheaded the neoclassical movement (right: Villa Cornaro, Venice, c1570). His influence on proportion can be seen everywhere, from the Capitol building in Washington DC right down to the humble cowshed. A new exhibition at London's RIBA, 'Palladian Design: the Good, the Bad and the Unexpected', celebrates Palladio's work by juxtaposing it with that of a selection of Britain's leading historic architects, including Colen Campbell, William Kent and Edwin Lutyens, who between them turned Palladianism into a national style. Exhibits include beautiful original drawings from the RIBA private collection, as well as models, photographs, films and designs by contemporary architects such as Oswald Mathias Ungers (above: Glashutte, c1985). Until 9 January (architecture.com).



Coming soon London's South Bank is to gain a brand-new theatre. Award-winning architectural practice Haworth Tompkins' 900-seat venue, close to Tower Bridge, is set to open in spring 2017. Ex-National Theatre director Nicholas Hytner, known for hits such as 'The History Boys' and 'War Horse', is the driving force and hopes to showcase 'exciting new plays from exciting new playwrights' (londontheatrecompany.co.uk).



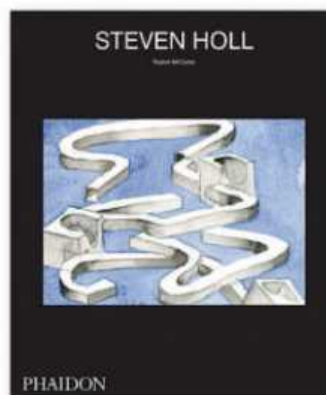
THE MODULAR HOME

Sir Richard Rogers' practice Stirk Harbour + Partners is responsible for some of London's most notable landmarks, including the Leadenhall Building (aka 'the Cheese Grater'), but its latest project sets out to prove that affordable housing can be impressive, too. The Y:Cube in south London is an innovative housing scheme for the youth charity YMCA made up of 36 prefabricated cabins, which are stacked in three-storey blocks and placed around a central courtyard. The lightweight, flatpacked one-bedroom flats are designed to be easily transported and quickly installed, offering cool but cheap modern homes – each one costs just £30,000 to build (rsh-p.com).

WORDS: JAMES WILLIAMS PICTURES: ANDREW SMART, STEFAN WUELLER

HOUSE FOR HAMPSTEAD

Following the success of Grayson Perry's 'House for Essex', which opened earlier this year, Charles Holland, one of the creative minds behind the project, is working on another eccentric building, this time in north London. The 'Hampstead House' (render, right), created with Living Architecture, will feature rooms devoted to historic local heroes: poet John Keats, painter John Constable and legendary psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud (living-architecture.co.uk).



HOLL IN ONE

Steven Holl is one of the most successful American architects currently working, known for the award-winning Simmons Hall at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts. His Maggie's cancer care centre at London's St Bartholomew's Hospital is currently under construction. *Steven Holl* (Phaidon, £59.95), showcases his 30-year career, with photographs and Holl's own watercolour drawings.



TALK OF THE TOWN

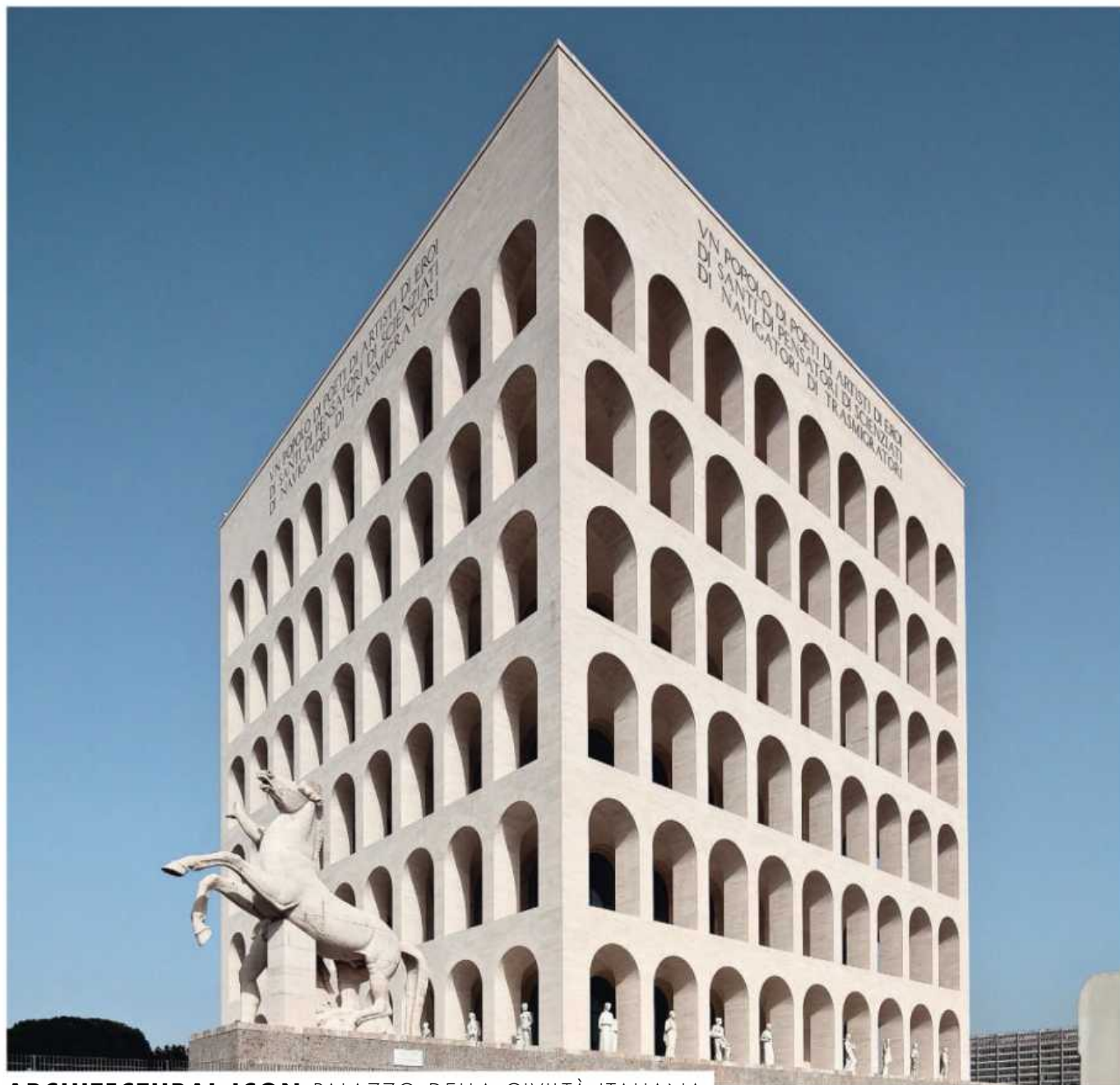
Chicago is hosting its first architecture biennial, joining Venice and Sao Paulo in the tradition. Addressing the theme 'The State of the Art of Architecture', there will be an installation by architect Sou Fujimoto, designer of 2013's Serpentine Pavilion. Until January 3 (chicagoarchitecturebiennial.org).



ALPHABET STREET

North London-based architectural practice Studio RHE has converted a 1930s office block on London's Finsbury Square into Alphabeta, a new social working environment. In place of the standard office format, the building has a central glass atrium filled with natural daylight, around which are clustered a network of informal meeting spaces, chill-out zones and a rooftop terrace. The best detail, though, is the winding bike ramp (above), which allows workers to cycle off the road and straight into the heart of this creative space (alphabetabuilding.com).

PICTURES: IWAN BAAH; HUFTON + CROW



ARCHITECTURAL ICON PALAZZO DELLA CIVILTÀ ITALIANA

Marvel at Mussolini's vision for a new imperial Rome

Words JAMES WILLIAMS

TODAY, THE IMPRESSIVE COMPLEX OF BUILDINGS that form the EUR, or Esposizione Universale Roma, south of the Italian capital city is a hub for international cultural events and cool businesses. The pristine 1930s structure that stands at its centre, known as the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana or 'Colosseo Quadrato' (Square Coliseum), has played host to catwalk shows by Giorgio Armani and recently became the new headquarters of fashion house Fendi. Yet the building has a troubling past.

The Palazzo, constructed between 1938 and 1943, is an icon of 20th-century neoclassicism, but it is also a monument of Italian Fascism. Dictator Benito Mussolini was more successful than Hitler in Germany and Franco in Spain when it came to making his mark architecturally, and the EUR complex was devised as a celebration of Italy at the planned World Fair of 1942, which

never took place due to the outbreak of WWII. Mussolini's chief architect, Marcello Piacentini, shared his leader's ideals, seeking to create an example of modern, 'simplified neoclassicism', as he described it. The Palazzo captured this style perfectly, clad in pale travertine marble with white stone details and decorated with mythological sculptures and friezes. Its symmetrical arches – six rising vertically and nine across each side – represent the number of letters in Mussolini's Christian name and surname.

If you find yourself in Rome, look beyond the romantic ruins – the Palazzo is a vision of what Italy's first city might have looked like had history taken a different path. Visit between 23 October and 7 March, 2016 to see 'Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana and the Esposizione Universale Roma', an exhibition by Fendi featuring photos by Karl Lagerfeld. *Quadrato della Concordia, Rome, Italy*

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PICTURE: ADRIANO BRUSAERI (PHOTOGRAPHY); LARIA BACCOCCHI (ASSISTANT)

A close-up portrait of a woman with light brown hair pulled back into a bun, wearing a black headband and black-rimmed glasses. She is looking slightly to the side with a soft expression. She is wearing a dark, textured coat over a black top. The background is a blurred urban setting with a metal railing. The entire image is framed by a thin white border.

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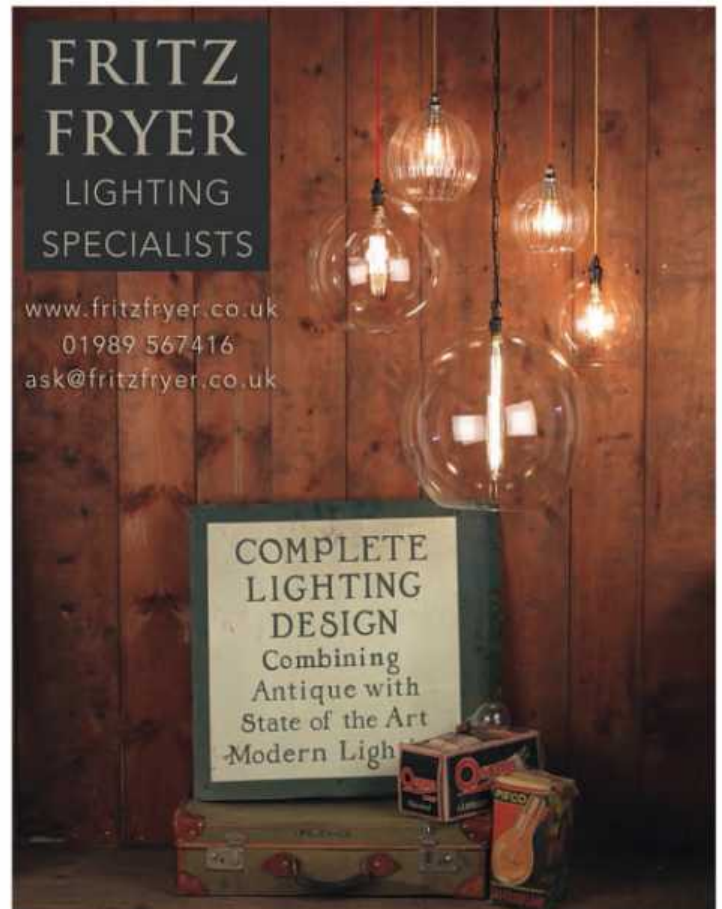
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18. The 'Tank' watch by Cartier

Words **JAMES WILLIAMS**

Who would have thought that a single complaint could spark the invention of something so elegant, iconic and timeless? In 1904, aviation pioneer Alberto Santos-Dumont pointed out to his friend, Parisian-born watchmaker Louis-François Cartier, how difficult it was to check the time using his pocket watch while airborne in an open cockpit (air travel was a bit different in those days). Cartier solved the problem by creating one of the world's first wristwatches, which he christened the 'Santos'. The seamless blending of the square watch-face into the strap was considered revolutionary.

As WWI raged, Cartier witnessed hundreds of tanks sweeping through western Europe; the rolling mechanism that propelled them inspired him to design a new wristwatch with a rectangular face that merged more completely with the strap. In 1917, Cartier presented General John Pershing, Commander-in-Chief of the

American Expeditionary Force, with the first 'Tank' watch. The timepiece featured extravagant curves that were fashionable at the time and it was an instant hit; in the years since, the overall design hasn't altered from this original, innovative vision.

Variations have, however, been added to the range – some have Roman numerals, others Hindu-Arabic; some sport metal-link straps, others leather. Popular models like the 'Tank Louis Cartier' (a rounded design exemplifying Art Deco style, worn by Louis-François Cartier himself), 'Tank Americaine' (featuring an elongated watch case) and 'Tank Française' (which has a chain-link bracelet) have been worn by countless actors, writers and artists. Jackie Kennedy, Andy Warhol and Yves Saint Laurent have all adorned their wrists with this quintessentially French timepiece, cementing it as a classic for all time. From £1,850, Cartier (cartier.co.uk). **ED**



CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Inspired by the tracks that propelled Renault tanks along the streets of Europe during WWI, Louis-François Cartier created the sleek, elongated design of the 'Tank' wristwatch – still in production today.



TIMELESS DESIGN

The first 'Tank' watch (above) went on sale in 1919. Different straps and faces have been added (left), but the essence of the design remains unchanged.



FAMOUS FACES

This French timepiece has global appeal. It has graced the wrists of such icons as Andy Warhol and Jackie Kennedy.

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1 Egyptian stool by Ole Wanscher for Carl Hansen & Son 2 London candleholder by Lara Bohinc for Skultuna 3 Mariposa sofa by Edward Barber & Jay Osgerby for Vitra 4 Nordic bowl by VE2 for Skagerak 5 NJP work lamp by nendo for Louis Poulsen 6 FH429 chair by Frits Henningsen for Carl Hansen 7 Hattarakukka cushion by Aino-Maija Metsola for Marimekko 8 Mod. 2097 pendant lamp by Gino Sarfatti for Flos 9 Kastehelmi tumbler by Oiva Toikka for Iittala 10 Series 7 chairs by Arne Jacobsen for Fritz Hansen 11 Fourways carpet by Ritva Puotila for Woodnotes 12 Grace credenza by Eva Schildt for Studio Skandium 13 Christmas mobile by Skultuna 14 Newspaper stand by Woodnotes 15 Taika tableware series by Klaus Haapaniemi for Iittala 16 Nakashima chair by George Nakashima for Knoll 17 Black fluted teapot and mugs by Royal Copenhagen 18 Ilse candleholder by Ilse Crawford for Georg Jensen 19 Raakel fabric by Paavo Halonen for Marimekko 20 Ilse bowl by Ilse Crawford for Georg Jensen



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